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ABSTRACT

The two issues of the journal "Rural Libraries" for 1990 contain a total of seven articles. "Cooperation and Rural Libraries," by Jackie Schmitt, reports on a nationwide survey of 119 rural libraries' participation in intrastate library cooperatives. "Rural Public Library Service to Native Americans," by Susan Hollaran, outlines strategies for the rural librarian developing an outreach program to serve American Indian communities. "Black Illiteracy in the Rural South," by Evelyn Wesman, reviews information on rates of functional illiteracy among rural black Southerners and describes two successful rural literacy programs. "The Rural Environment's Effects on Library Service: A Consultant's Perspective," by Gardner C. Hanks, discusses rural population traits relevant to the library consultant, as well as characteristics of libraries and librarians in seven types of small towns. "Planning Multitype Services in a Rural Environment," by Annabel K. Stephens and Kathryn D. Wright, reports on a survey assessing the needs and priorities of the 41 member libraries in a cooperative multitype library system in southeast Alabama. "Strategic Planning for Rural Libraries: A California Case," by James I. Grieshop and Phelan R. Fretz, describes four community assessment methods in the strategic planning process used by the Yolo County (California) Library System. "Adolescent Reading: A Study of Twelve Rural Pennsylvania Towns," by Harold W. Willits and Fern K. Willits, reports on a survey of the reading habits of 3,294 8th and 11th graders. (SV)

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COOPERATION AND RURAL LIBRARIES

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Introduction

The term "cooperation" as used in the field of librarianship is diverse both in meaning and in connotation. While it would certainly be difficult to quantify and analyze the subjective "cooperative mindset" that appears to be present in many persons working in the field, it is possible to study what types of library services have been added in libraries as a result of cooperative activities and how library personnel respond to specific questions about these activities.

In reviewing the professional literature that explores library cooperation, this author could find no evidence of an attempt to conduct a nationwide survey that asked librarians the types of services or resources that are added or enhanced as a result of cooperative activities and how satisfied librarians are with their libraries' participation in cooperative activities. Therefore, this author chose to conduct a library survey of this type. In order to limit the scope of the research, the survey was sent specifically to rural public library directors who are administrators of libraries participating in at least one cooperative group that is not multi-state. This group could be called a "system," a "network," a "consortia," or any other name as long as it is a cooperative group that is not multi-state. This author uses the term "rural public library" to designate a public library that is in a population center of 25,000 or fewer persons; this is the working definition of "rural" that is used by the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship at Clarion University of Pennsylvania.¹ The methodology and results of this survey, along with summarization and conclusions, constitute the latter part of this paper. In addition, this author felt that it would be helpful to also present an introductory overview of the professional literature dealing with library cooperation (and particularly that literature which specifically discusses, or is relevant to, the rural public library)

before presenting the survey data. By doing this it is hoped that some of the opinions and research of persons published in the area of library cooperation can be compared with ease to the data collected by this author.

Overview of the Professional Literature

The professional literature of library cooperation that this author consulted was fraught with recurring themes. One of these themes—a "fact versus fantasy" concern—seems very prevalent in library cooperation literature. A comparatively early illustration of this concern appeared in the professional literature in 1965. Ralph R. Shaw, a professor of library service at the University of Hawaii, presented a paper entitled "The Form and the Substance" at the 1964 Michigan Library Association conference. In this paper (which is reprinted in the February 1, 1965 issue of Library Journal) he uses the idea of library cooperation as one example of the library profession's tendency to assume that certain activities are "automatically okay" without anyone doing scientific research or reviewing research already completed. He explains how a doctoral candidate's research of three types of cooperative storage—an activity deemed "okay" by the library profession—could not find any facts to prove the existence of the supposed advantages of cooperative storage that the library profession had already agreed had existed.² In addition, Shaw writes the following about the formation of "larger library units" through interlibrary cooperation:

Similarly, we have in process a great wave of development of larger library units through interlibrary cooperation...Do we have any objective evidence that this is the only or the best way to achieve...our...objectives? Obviously not. But this will not stop the flood. The magic word "cooperation" serves to blank out our intellectual circuits and...leaves fact helpless against the okay word.³

This "fact versus fantasy" concern also exists among more contemporary persons in the field. Patricia Glass Schuman, President of Neal-Schuman Publishers, feels that librarians hold the following three "myths" about library networks: 1. Networks save libraries money; 2. Networks overcome the "bureaucratic structure" of libraries, and; 3. Networks overcome "barriers" among libraries.⁴ Schuman states that "...there is no evidence of overall cost savings because of networks..." and, although she believes that increasing costs

may be eliminating some of the savings, she also states that "...basically, however, most libraries joined networks with some naive assumptions about cost accounting and technology."⁶ Schuman also explains that participation in a network usually creates an additional responsibility for the library staff and administrators to train both staff and patrons in the uses of the new and different types of resources newly available to the library. Schuman refers to the research of Sara Fine, a psychologist and professor at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Library and Information Science, who found that library staff must accept a cooperative system before library patrons will and that a positive attitude about the system, thorough training of library staff, and open communication among administrators and staff about changes that are occurring can help to insure the success of the cooperative system.⁶ Schuman's third myth--the belief that networks can help to overcome "barriers" among libraries--is mentioned numerous times in the library cooperation literature. Schuman speaks of "ownership to access" attitudes and praises networks for tearing down some of the resource "ownership" attitude barriers and changing them into attitudes of "availability." However, she warns that the charging of fees, feelings of prestige, postage charges, and fragmentations among types of libraries and librarians continue to act as barriers that impede access. In addition, Schuman maintains that libraries must not be making much progress in getting resources to needy patrons because interlibrary loan circulation statistics constitute less than 2% of all library circulations.⁷

There may be no other person in the field quite as aggressive in expressing his views on library cooperation as is Thomas H Ballard, former director of the Plainfield (New Jersey) Public Library. Ballard is the author of the 1986 American Library Association publication The Failure of Resource Sharing in Public Libraries and Alternative Strategies for Service (reviewed and critiqued by F. Schlipf on pages 454-56 of the October 1987 issue of Library Quarterly), the University of Illinois' March 1987 Occasional Paper entitled "Knowin' All Them Things That Ain't So Managing Today's Public Library," and a host of journal articles (see the Selected Bibliography for publication information for these works). Ballard quotes statistics in an attempt to support the argument (shared with Schuman) that networking is an unappreciated,

expensive means of resource sharing that generally goes unused by library patrons; he does, however, state that rural library patrons seem to benefit slightly more from resource sharing than non-rural library patrons do. Schuman states, "What we [librarians] seem to do best is to convince library users to wait [for materials]"; Ballard echoes this in his Library Journal article "Public Library Networking: Neat, Plausible, Wrong" when he declares:

Resource sharing is a return to closed stacks with the added disadvantage of less certainty of delivery and a longer period to wait. Our patrons have historically disliked this arrangement and they are now used to better. It's scarcely surprising, therefore, that they make little use of the opportunities offered by networking.⁸

Thus, both Schuman and Ballard heavily emphasize the ratio of interlibrary loan circulation to total library circulation as evidence of the failure of resource sharing as a cooperative library activity. Not unlike Shaw's reference to cooperation as a "magic word" that is automatically "okay" in the eyes of the library profession,⁹ Ballard sees cooperation as having "...an unthinking place in the library literature"¹⁰ and concludes his American Libraries article with a challenge to the library profession to consider solutions to the problem of enhancing library services that are distinct from resource sharing.¹¹ His alternatives to resource sharing are the topic of his subsequent 1986 book. Like Schuman, Ballard is not totally anti-resource sharing and anti-networking. However, he feels that networking has taken up an inordinate amount of librarians' planning efforts and resources. He feels that public libraries need to borrow materials from other libraries occasionally but that networking costs are not appropriate to the size of the need. Ballard also has definitive views of multitype library cooperation, a topic also under intense discussion in the library cooperation literature. He feels that there is little value in putting forth effort to make resource-sharing cooperatives multitype because his statistics, which primarily come from Illinois interlibrary loan/circulation statistics, indicate that a very tiny percentage of interlibrary loan requests are filled by libraries other than public libraries or Reference and Research Centers.¹² Also, Ballard makes the statement that "librarians must be paid to cooperate!", inferring that only monetary gain makes cooperative activities valuable enough for libraries to want to participate.¹⁴ Ballard also insists that resource sharing

is such a marginal activity in the eyes of participating libraries that it is the first activity to be reduced or eliminated at signs of financial distress.¹⁴ One proponent of multitype library cooperation is Forrest F. Carhart, Jr., who states in his 1983 UNESCO Journal... article that:

...Consortia can benefit all library users only if they have as members all types of libraries...In an age when the producer of materials can transmit them to home, office or school, the library with a narrow focus is obsolete...¹⁵

In addition, Carhart's views oppose Ballard's claim that the existence of the "cooperative state of mind" and the desire to fill "the gaps of access to information between...the information rich and the information poor" cannot be considered as "hard" evidence to support networking.¹⁶ On the contrary, Carhart states, "When actions by librarians spring from a truly co-operative state of mind, the potential for service is enormous."¹⁷

There is no doubt that these recurring discussions in the library cooperation literature are relevant to rural library cooperation, and some authors do mention in passing the particular problems and concerns of the rural library and its attempts to cooperate. Schuman offers an important consideration of rural library cooperation--the attempt to provide timely and accurate resource materials that are comparable to those in larger libraries--when she relates the following anecdote:

A cousin of mine who lives in a suburban Bay Area community, an alumni of the University of California, Berkeley, just paid several hundred dollars to obtain the privilege to use the university library for his 16-year old son. "I don't understand it," he said. "Our local public library is small--it has very few research materials. When I was a kid, I could find almost anything at the public library." When he was a kid, his local library was the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Startled, I began to explain the difference between libraries, but then I quickly stopped. Can we really expect library users to differentiate? Can we blame their ignorance when they don't? Or is the problem endemic to the way libraries operate?¹⁸

What are the problems that prevent rural libraries from providing the same depth and types of information as large public libraries? According to John Head, few professionally trained staff members and inadequate budgets prevent rural libraries from stepping into "the information age." Head has determined through his research that very few rural libraries participate in online database

searching, online interlibrary loan and cataloging, or use of computers within the library. Head also gives the opinion that cooperatives and state library agencies are helpful in overcoming some of these problems, yet these institutions' own budget and staff limitations make them inadequate to the size of the task. Head also suggests that more research be done to determine the effectiveness of cooperatives and state library agencies in enhancing or adding to rural library services.³⁰ Head echoes Bernard Vavrek's belief that rural libraries must consolidate in order to keep up with the stiff competition from fee-based suppliers of information who are providing timely information to persons who need it and are able to pay for it. If this challenge is not met, Vavrek and Head feel that rural libraries could ultimately lose the support of their constituencies and become more like "children's libraries" or "reading rooms" than sources of vital information to communities generally needy of non-fee-based information services.³¹ Head also observes that isolation is another major problem for rural libraries because supporting reference materials and professional contacts are frequently many miles away. Vavrek also expresses this concern in the following statement from his Rowker Annual article

Library cooperation in the form of networks, at whatever level, offers crucial opportunities for the geographically remote library to compete. Without networking, there is little hope that the typical small public library can offer much in the way of timely and accurate reference information.³²

There is a great amount of professional literature that discusses the theoretical pros and cons of library cooperation in all types of libraries, yet there seems to be little attempt to collect large-scale statistical data to support different views of library cooperation. What types of information should be solicited when evaluating library cooperation? For example, William Amundson and Milton Mitchell indicate that the public library systems in the state of Wisconsin have had much positive impact on the quality of public library service, and they feel that future evaluations of the systems will be based on both the services the systems offer and the ways that systems staffs, member libraries, and trustees work together to identify and meet patron needs.³³ Because there are few statistical surveys of this type published in the professional literature, it may also be helpful when doing this type of research

to ask study participants if they have ever been asked in the past about the value/effectiveness of their cooperative memberships.

Illinois public libraries were the front-runners in planning, developing, and implementing public library systems and multitype library cooperatives. Thus it is not surprising that it is in the Illinois Statistical Report, no. 17 (1985) that there is found a report of an evaluation of materials and services offered by the Illinois library systems. In 1983, twenty years after the eighteen library systems were formed in Illinois to provide increased library services, the ILA/PLA Statistics Analysis Committee recommended doing an evaluation of materials and services offered by the systems. This study is the first in Illinois to survey member public libraries, selected system services were evaluated previously in surveys of member academic, special, and school libraries. The study encompassed seventeen of the eighteen cooperative library systems in Illinois (in which all of the public libraries have their own policies and governing boards); the Chicago Public Library System was not included because it is a consolidated system.²⁴

Head librarians of the selected sample libraries received the survey after intense review, revision, and pre-test of the survey form. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Use of System Services and Experience with System Services. One hundred libraries from the seventeen cooperative systems were selected to receive surveys, and the libraries in each system were categorized by size of population served with a proportionate sample being chosen from each system so that at least 10% of the libraries in each system were represented. Responses by libraries were kept confidential, none of the system directors knew which of their libraries were chosen to participate in the survey.²⁵

The survey achieved a 93% response rate. Responses were analyzed as a whole, no analyses were made of the data for individual systems (although it was understood that many of the same response to a particular question could indicate that respondents were all from one system). Briefly, the data collected and analyzed supports the following statements:

- A. 16mm films and videocassettes were the most frequently used systems materials
- B. Respondents were generally pleased with materials offered by the systems.

- C. Under the heading "Information and Communication Services," services most frequently used were "Advice of System Consultants" and "Union Lists of Periodicals"; both were rated as satisfactory in general. Of other services offered by the systems, Delivery, Interlibrary Loan, Backup Reference, and Reciprocal Borrowing were the most heavily used and were overwhelmingly rated as satisfactory.
- D. In the second part of the survey - "Experience with Systems Services" - 65.6% of the respondents indicated that systems' staffs were "almost always" able to help them with problems/questions and 34.4% indicated that staffs "usually" or "sometimes" were able to help them. Respondents in libraries serving populations of less than 10,000 gave a higher number of "almost always" answers.
- E. 22.8% of the respondents indicated that a system staff member had not visited their library in the past year; 87.1% of the respondents reported that they had visited the system headquarters two or more times in the past year. Respondents in libraries serving more than 25,000 were most likely to have traveled to the system headquarters.
- F. 85% of respondents in libraries serving a population numbering greater than 25,000 persons had served on a library system committee. Only 33% of the respondents in libraries serving less than 5,000 persons had served on committees. 71% of all 92 respondents had attended meetings of member public libraries. 32.6% of the 92 respondents said that they were well-informed about system affairs, 64.1% said fairly well-informed, and 33% said not informed. 46.7% of the respondents from libraries serving populations of 10,000 or more persons rated themselves as very well-informed while 25.8% of the respondents from libraries serving populations of less than 10,000 persons rated themselves as very well-informed.
- G. 8.7% of the 92 respondents said that their points of view were almost always considered in the forming of system policies and decisions, 69.6% thought that their views were either usually or sometimes considered, and 21.7% felt that their views were never considered. Analysis of these figures by population served was not significant.
- H. A substantially larger proportion of the respondents in libraries serving populations of fewer than 10,000 persons gave higher quality/competence ratings to systems' staffs than respondents in libraries serving populations of 10,000 or more (82.5% versus 53%)

- I. In a question asking respondents to suggest systems services for elimination if state aid to systems was reduced, these three services were not mentioned as possibilities for elimination: interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing, and services to the blind and handicapped.
- J. The following were most frequently mentioned as services that respondents would like to see added if funds permit: cooperative/centralized acquisitions and processing, collection development, more staff, and delivery services.
- K. Respondents in libraries serving populations of 5,000 persons or less were the least likely to have travelled to their system headquarters during the last year. Likewise, a statistically significant number of the respondents in these smaller libraries have never served on a library system committee.²⁶

From this systems study and from the previous studies of affiliate members of the systems, it can be concluded that Illinois librarians are satisfied with their use of Illinois library systems services and with the materials that are provided by those systems. And, the study also suggests that Illinois libraries serving populations of less than 10,000 persons are significantly more satisfied with aid received from the system staffs.²⁷ In addition, the survey coordinators also stress the importance of continued evaluation of each individual library system's efficiency and effectiveness in order to allow the state-wide network to be effective in fulfilling its objectives.²⁸

In December 1986 a comprehensive study of the eighteen Illinois library systems was published. Commissioned by the Illinois State Library and prepared by the library consulting firm HBW Associates, Vision 1996: A Plan for the Illinois Library Systems in the Next Decade has been heavily criticized by library and systems personnel because of many objections to its overall recommendations. Of the fifteen major recommendations, the following three seem to be the most objectionable. 1) the formation of six systems from the existing eighteen; 2) the dispersion of resource materials from systems' headquarters to local libraries, and; 3) the contracting out of some of the services being provided directly by the systems' headquarters to the members libraries. Many Illinois library and systems personnel believe that fewer systems will result in fewer services, that poorer services will result due to increased distances between systems' headquarters and member libraries, and

that there will be inadequate funds to contract out for services such as interlibrary loan and delivery services."

SURVEY OF RURAL LIBRARIES' PARTICIPATION IN LIBRARY COOPERATIVES

Methodology

Two hundred and thirty-nine public libraries located in population centers of 25,000 or fewer persons and members of at least one non-multi-state library cooperative were randomly selected from the American Library Directory, 38th edition (ALD) to receive survey forms by mail. No library was rejected because of the type of library cooperative group that it participates in unless that library's only cooperative participation, according to ALD, is a multi-state library network such as OCLC, WLN, etc. Film cooperatives, circulation cooperatives, county/district library systems, statewide interlibrary loan networks, and others are examples of the types of library cooperatives that the surveyed libraries participate in. Cover letters enclosed with the survey forms were addressed to the persons listed as Library Directors in ALD or to the persons listed as Librarians if there was no one listed as holding the position of Library Director. Because of time limitations and the subsequent inability to send a follow-up letter if a selected library did not return its survey form within two weeks, the surveys were not coded.

Results

One hundred and twenty-eight of the 239 surveys that were mailed out were returned in time to be included in the study report (54%). Of the 128 surveys returned, 119 were completed in such a way that they were reportable in the study (92%). The nine unusable surveys were not included in the study report for the following four reasons:

1. The responding library does not currently participate in the library cooperative listed in its ALD entry (surveys were returned without being completed): Four instances.
2. The community in which the responding library is located currently has a population of greater than 25,000 persons (surveys were returned without being completed): Three instances

3. The community in which the library is located currently has a population of fewer than 25,000 persons, but there are larger, industrialized towns in the surrounding area (survey was returned without being completed): One instance.
4. One survey came back with confusing and sometimes-illegible responses.

When a respondent gave two answers to a question in which it was indicated on the survey form to answer with only one of the options, each of the respondent's answers to that question was counted as 1/2 of a response (.5). Consult Appendix C to see the collected data inserted onto the blank survey form, and please note that percentages derived from the collected data are rounded off to the nearest one-hundredth.

The majority of the cooperatives that these 119 libraries participate in have sixteen or more members (76.5 responses / 64%). Twenty-four respondents indicated that they participate in cooperatives that have between eleven and fifteen members (20%), 9 respondents indicated that their cooperatives have between six and ten members (8%), and 8.5 respondents indicated that their cooperatives have between one and 5 members (7%). A great proportion of the 119 respondent public libraries indicated that fellow cooperative members include other public libraries (117 responses / 98%). Fifty-two respondents indicated that college/university libraries were members of their cooperatives (44%), 43 respondents indicated that school libraries were members of their cooperatives (36%), and medical/hospital libraries, corporate libraries, and law libraries were indicated by 29, 17, and 8 respondents respectively (24%, 14%, and 7%). A type of library other than the previously mentioned six types was indicated by 18 respondents (15%).

Interlibrary loan of books, consultation/idea exchange, and interlibrary loan of non-book materials are the most engaged-in cooperative activities among members of the cooperatives to which the respondent libraries belong. One hundred and sixteen respondents indicated that their cooperative members participate in interlibrary loan of books (97%), 99 respondents indicated that their cooperative members participate in consultation/idea exchange (83%), and 91 respondents indicated that their cooperative members participate in interlibrary loan of non-book materials (76%). In specifying the types of

non-book materials that are lent from library to library, 37 of the 91 respondents indicated that videocassettes were lent, 30 respondents indicated that films/16mm films were lent, and 28 respondents indicated that records were lent. Sixty-eight respondents indicated that their cooperative members lobby for financial support (57%), 48 respondents indicated that their cooperative members support extension services (40%), 7 respondents indicated that their cooperative members share a building (6%), and 32 respondents indicated participation in "other" activities (27%). Of the 32 respondents that indicated "other," 9 mentioned continuing education, 7 mentioned cooperative purchasing/ordering, and 4 mentioned centralized cataloging/processing.

In response to a question asking respondent libraries whether their cooperatives have headquarters and employees apart and distinct from the member libraries, a majority of respondents (91 / 76%) answered that there is a separate cooperative headquarters with distinct employees. A majority of respondents (75 / 63%) also indicated that there is a collection of resource materials in book format at their cooperative headquarters that is distinct from any member library's collection. In every case in which the latter is true, staff members of the member libraries are permitted to use these resources (75 / 100%); in a large majority of cases, member libraries' patrons are permitted to borrow these materials (61 / 85%).

Table I lists responses to a question inquiring about types of non-book resources/facilities that are available to the respondents' libraries only because of their participation in their cooperative groups.

Table I

Non-Book Resources/Facilities Available to Respondents' Libraries
As A Result of Participation in a Library Cooperative
(119 possible respondents)

Resource/Facility Respondent	Number of Responses	%
16mm films	75	63%
*for library's use	60 of 75	80% of 75
*for patron loan	57 of 75	76% of 75
videocassette tapes	65	55%
*for library's use	50 of 65	77% of 75
*for patron loan	52	80% of 65

Resource/Facility Respondent	Number of Responses	%
use of bibliographic utility for inter-library loan	60	50%
use of bibliographic utility for cataloging	52	44%
library science journals and/or other professional literature	51	43%
audiovisual equipment	42	35%
*for library's use	33 of 42	77% of 42
*for patron loan	26 of 42	62% of 42
multimedia equipment/supplies	35	29%
*for library's use	27 of 35	77% of 35
*for patron loan	19 of 35	54% of 35
duplicating equipment or other facility to produce signage and/or publicity brochures	24	20%
microcomputer(s)	23	19%
use of an online computer system for acquisitions	19	16%
software for microcomputers	15	13%
telefacsimile equipment	15	13%
telephone	14	12%
photocopier	12	10%
typewriter(s)	8	7%
use of an online computer system for serials control	7	6%
other(s):	13	11%

*art prints/art works received 3 responses

*storytelling packets/puppets, union lists, and talking books received 2 responses each

A large majority of the respondents indicated that a body of representatives from member libraries of their cooperatives meets periodically to discuss policy, acquisitions, and programming (104 / 87%); 37 of these 104 respondents (33%) indicated that their representative bodies meet once a month, 21 respondents (19%) indicated that the bodies meet once every six months, and 17 of the 41 respondents answering the question with the option "other" indicated that their representative bodies meet quarterly. A significantly large number of respondents (100 of the 119 / 84%) feel that all member libraries of their cooperatives are being adequately represented in cooperative decisions, while only 17 of the 119 respondents (14%) do not feel that all member libraries are being represented adequately (two libraries did not answer the question/2%).

Greater than 50% of the respondents indicated that a consultant or an administrator from their cooperative visits their library at least once a year. Twenty-eight respondents (24%) indicated that a consultant/administrator visits once a year, 15.5 respondents (13%) indicated that a consultant/administrator visits once every six months, 8 respondents (7%) indicated that a consultant/administrator visits once a month, and 2.5 respondents (2%) indicated that a consultant/administrator visits once a week. Sixteen respondents (13%) indicated that a consultant/administrator visits less than once a year, and 20 of the 36 respondents who indicated "other" wrote that a consultant/administrator visits whenever asked or needed. Sixty-three percent of the 119 respondents indicated that the consultant's/administrator's visits were of average or higher value to their libraries; on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), 26 respondents (22%) gave the visits the highest ranking, 19 respondents (16%) gave the visits ranking 4, 30 respondents (25%) gave the visits ranking 3, 10 respondents (8%) gave the visits ranking 2, 5 respondents (4%) gave the visits the lowest ranking, 16 respondents answered with the option "not applicable," and 13 respondents did not answer the question.

Greater than 3/4 (78.5%) of the respondents' cooperative headquarters/administrators have held three or more continuing education workshops in 1987 for staff of member libraries. Fifty-three and one-half respondents (45%) indicated that between 3 and 5 workshops were held, 26.5 respondents (22%) indicated that 1 or 2 workshops were held, 22 respondents (18%) indicated that

between 6 and 10 workshops were held, 8 respondents (7%) indicated that 11 or more workshops were held, 7 respondents (6%) indicated that no workshops were held, and 2 persons did not answer the question (2%).

Almost all respondents (113 of 119 / 95%) participate in interlibrary loan with their fellow cooperative members. Table II gives responses to two questions asking for the approximate number of items lent to other cooperative members per month and the approximate number of items borrowed from other cooperative members per month.

Table II

Approximate Number of Items Lent To and Items Borrowed
From Cooperative Members Per Month

# of Items	# of Respondents Indicating This Many Lent per Month & (Percentage of 111 Respondents to Question)	# of Respondents Indicating This Many Borrowed per Month & (Percentage of 109 Respondents to Question)
0 - 24	83 (75%)	61 (56%)
25 - 49	14 (13%)	24 (22%)
50 - 74	3 (3%)	8 (7%)
75 - 99	1 (1%)	5 (5%)
100 or more	10 (8%)	11 (10%)

A greater number of the respondent libraries' cooperatives have delivery services to and from all member libraries (76/64%) than do not have delivery services (43/36%). Usually there are no monetary charges to either the member libraries (68/89%) or to patrons of member libraries (73/92%) for interlibrary loan materials sent via these delivery services.

Sixty-four of the 119 respondents indicated that their libraries do not receive additional financial support as a result of participating in their cooperative (54%), 47 respondents indicated that their libraries do receive additional financial support (39%), and 8 persons did not answer the question

(7%). A somewhat related question asked the respondent to indicate a degree of agreement/disagreement with the statement "The extra costs that my library is incurring because of resource sharing is resulting in more effective service to my patrons." Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree with this statement; 63 respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement (53%), 32.5 respondents indicated that they agree with the statement (27%), 5.5 respondents were neutral to the statement (5%), and 14 respondents indicated that the statement was not applicable to their libraries (12%).

In a question asking the member libraries how active their cooperative headquarters/administrators are in publicizing the existence of the cooperative and its services, 85% of the respondents indicated that their cooperative headquarters were at least somewhat active in publicity. Fifty-eight and one-half respondents indicated that their cooperative headquarters/administrators were very active in publicity (49%), 42.5 respondents indicated that their cooperative headquarters/administrators were somewhat active in publicity (36%), and 13 respondents indicated that their cooperative headquarters/administrators were not active in publicity (11%). In a question asking the member libraries how active their cooperative systems are in asking for support from community, state, and/or federal organizations, 87% of the respondents indicated that their cooperatives were at least somewhat active. Sixty and one-half respondents indicated that their cooperative systems were very active in asking for support (51%), 42.5 respondents indicated that their systems were somewhat active in asking for support (36%), 8 respondents indicated that their systems were not active in asking for support (7%), and 8 respondents did not answer the question (7%).

Responses to a question asking respondents if their libraries had ever been surveyed about the effectiveness/value of their cooperative memberships indicated that a large majority of respondents were either never surveyed about their cooperative memberships in the past or did not know if the former director(s)/librarian(s) was/were ever surveyed. Fifty and one-half respondents indicated that they were never surveyed in the past (42%), 39.5 respondents indicated that they did not know if their libraries were surveyed in the past

(33%), 26 respondents indicated that they were surveyed in the past (22%), and 3 persons did not answer the question (3%). Of the 26 respondents who indicated that their libraries were surveyed in the past about the effectiveness/value of their cooperative memberships, 12 indicated that the surveys were done between 1 and 2 years ago (46%), 11 indicated that the surveys were done less than 1 year ago (42%), and one respondent each indicated that the surveys were done between 3 and 4 years ago, 4 and 5 years ago, and more than 5 years ago (4% each). Eight respondents indicated that the surveys were done by an independent researcher/research firm (31%), 7 respondents indicated that the surveys were done by their cooperative headquarters/administrators (27%), 7 respondents indicated that the surveys were done by a state library agency (27%), 1 respondent indicated that the survey was done by a professional association or organization (4%), and the 3 "other" responses consisted of written comments from two respondents indicating that they could not remember who conducted the survey and a comment from one respondent stating, "the people who work here."

When asked to rank the value of their cooperative memberships on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), a large majority of respondents gave their cooperative memberships ranking 5 (78 respondents / 66%) and 90% of the respondents ranked the value of their cooperative memberships as average or above. Nineteen respondents ranked the value of their cooperative memberships at 4 (16%), 10 respondents ranked the value of their cooperative memberships at 3 (8%), 4 respondents ranked the value of their cooperative memberships at 2 (3%), 5 respondents ranked the value of their cooperative memberships at 1 (4%), and 3 persons did not answer the question (3%).

Conclusion

When analyzing similar responses to the survey questions, one must keep in mind (as Drone did with the Illinois systems survey) that the same response to a question may be coming from member libraries of the same cooperative(s). Thus, the percentage of a particular response to a particular question may not be indicative of the population of rural public libraries that exists but of only this particular sample

In general, the cooperatives that these libraries participate in are, for the most part, composed of academic libraries and other public libraries. Interlibrary loan seems to be the most engaged-in cooperative activity, and in many cases audiovisual materials such as 16mm films and videocassettes are available to member libraries and their patrons because of the cooperatives. Consultation and idea exchange are also popular cooperative activities and, in most cases, representatives of the cooperatives' member libraries meet at least once a year for discussion. Almost 2/3 of the cooperative members have delivery services at their disposal for delivery to other cooperative members, and usually there are no fees charged to the libraries (and consequently no fees charged to patrons) for utilizing this delivery. The majority of cooperative members are not "getting paid" for participating in their cooperatives, yet the majority of libraries (80%) agree or strongly agree that their patrons are receiving more effective service because of the resource sharing that takes place among their cooperatives' members. Cooperative headquarters are usually at least somewhat active in publicity and solicitation of support from various organizations, and in most cases (more than 2/3) the responding libraries indicate that all member libraries of their cooperatives are equally willing to cooperate in ways advised by the headquarters or representative bodies. Less than one quarter of the persons responding to the questionnaire were sure that their libraries had been surveyed in the past about the effectiveness/value of their cooperative memberships.

Two-thirds of the respondents assigned the highest value (5) to their cooperative memberships. Greater than 4/5 of the respondents assigned either the highest value (5) or the next lowest value (4). Thirty of the 119 respondents are definite interlibrary loan net borrowers as indicated in Q-16/Q-17; 24 of these respondents (80%) assigned the highest value to their

cooperative memberships. Five of the 119 respondents are definite interlibrary loan net lenders as determined in Q-16/Q-17; two of these respondents (40%) assigned value 3 to their cooperative memberships, two (40%) assigned the highest value (5) to their cooperative memberships, and one (20%) assigned value 4 to their cooperative memberships. A larger number of interlibrary loan net lenders within this survey sample may have allowed for a more significant analysis of interlibrary loan borrowing/lending versus assignment of value to cooperative memberships. However, it appears that the net borrowers in this sample understandably assign a high value to their cooperative memberships.

Forty-six of the 119 survey respondents (39%) indicated that they receive some sort of additional financial support as a result of participating in their cooperatives. Of those 46, 32 (70%) assign the highest value to their cooperative memberships and 42 (92%) assign an average or higher value to their memberships. Sixty-five of the 119 respondents (55%) indicated that they do not receive some sort of additional financial support as a result of participating in their cooperatives. Of those 64, 44 (68%) assign the highest value to their cooperative memberships and 60 (92%) assign an average or higher value to their memberships. One can conclude from these statistics that, at least in this particular sample, libraries do not have to be "paid" to cooperate (at least in the sense of receiving additional monies) in order to value their cooperative memberships highly.

Briefly, in comparing this author's survey results with the Illinois systems survey results, it appears that 16mm films and videocassettes are frequently used and lent cooperative resources. In general, library staffs seem to be satisfied with what their cooperatives have to offer them and with what advice

and consultation the cooperative headquarters' staffs have to give them. In the majority of cases a staff member of the cooperative headquarters comes to visit member libraries at least once a year. Interlibrary loan is a vital cooperative activity to the vast majority of the sample member libraries of both surveys.

In some cases, notation on the survey forms that this author mailed would seem to indicate that the 1 to 5 ranking method was misunderstood (i.e., respondents would circle "1," strike it out, and circle "5"). In addition, a broader explanation of what this author means by the term "cooperative" in the cover letter may have alleviated some confusion on the part of some survey respondents who felt that a formal library "system" or a district library association that is governmentally assigned is not considered by this author to be a "cooperative." Also, it may be helpful in future research to ask specific questions about cooperative membership fees and budgeting for library cooperation. This author believes that research done on the statewide and local levels that deals with library cooperation should be published in the library literature for the profession's benefit; research is apparently being done in some cases (according to these survey results) but with few exceptions is not being published in the professional literature. More statistical analysis is needed in order to prove and disprove the many theories of library cooperation that appear in the professional literature.

NOTES

¹Bernard Vavrek, "Rural Libraries: The Era of Consolidation," in Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information. (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1987), 84.

²Ralph R. Shaw, "The Form and the Substance," Library Journal 90 (Feb. 1, 1985): 567-68.

³Shaw, 568.

⁴Patricia Glass Shuman, "Library Networks: A Means, Not an End," Library Journal 112 (February 1, 1987): 33-34.

⁵Schuman, 34.

⁶Schuman, 35.

⁷Schuman, 36.

⁸Schuman, 36.

⁹Thomas H. Ballard, "Public Library Networking: Neat, Plausible, Wrong," Library Journal 107 (April 1, 1982): 682.

¹⁰Shaw, 567.

¹¹Ballard, "Public Library Networking," 683.

¹²Thomas H. Ballard, "Dogma Clouds the Facts: Public Libraries Need Proof of Benefits Before Spending Millions on Resource Sharing," American Libraries 16 (April 1985): 259.

¹³Ballard, "Public Library Networking," 681.

¹⁴Ballard, "Public Library Networking," 679.

¹⁵Ballard, "Public Library Networking," 682.

¹⁶Forrest F. Carhart, Jr., "Library Cooperation Brings Benefits: A Pattern For Action," UNESCO Journal of Information Science, Librarianship, and Archives Administration V (1983): 223-25.

¹⁷Ballard, "Dogma Clouds the Facts," 258.

¹⁸Carhart, 223.

¹⁹Schuman, 33.

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RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO NATIVE AMERICANS

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"Indian people have a deep and innate respect for knowledge and for the wisdom distilled from the combination of knowledge and experience together. They have a very deeply imbedded instinct for passing along knowledge and experience from one generation to another."¹

When the first European settlers came to this country, its native inhabitants numbered about two million. By 1900 disease, starvation, and the deliberate genocidal policies of the federal and territorial governments had reduced that population to 200,000. Today, although "Native Americans on a national average have the shortest life span of any ethnic group; the highest infant mortality rate; the highest suicide rate; the lowest per capita income; the highest unemployment, the highest high school dropout rate, the poorest housing and the most inadequate health care . . ." their population has rebounded to an estimated 1.4 million.² While this represents a mere .06 percent of the total U.S. population, 49% of the Native Americans counted in the 1980 census reside in four Western states (New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arizona, and California)³, and within New Mexico they constitute between 8 to 10 percent of the state population. (It is generally accepted by legislators in the West that Indian residents were undercounted in the census, which accounts for the range in these percentages.) In certain counties within the first three of these states 25-75% of the population may be Native American.⁴ In Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma most of the Indian people live on or near their reservations, and as a glance at a Southwestern map will show, most of these reservations lie at a significant distance from any of the few major metropolitan areas in the states. In short, Native Americans make up a significant segment of the rural Southwestern population, and for the public librarian in these regions, Indians represent a large community of library users.

Unfortunately, although American Indians have a high regard for education and have frequently requested that the Federal Government assist them in setting up libraries on reservations and within Indian communities, rural Native Americans are infrequent users of public libraries within non-native townships. Perhaps more unfortunately still, this lack of use is not generally because of the presence of active Indian-run libraries within their own communities. (If these facilities did exist where needed and with adequate funding, it would be a cause for celebration and this paper would not have been written.) Rather, there is a general perception among Indians, as among many other U. S. minority groups, that "Anglo" community libraries are not for them, that these facilities will not contain materials relevant to their lives, their history of their contemporary concerns and, furthermore, that the library neither seeks nor welcomes their presence. Marcia Nauratil addresses this problem in her excellent book: Public Libraries and Non-traditional Clienteles:

"While the doors of the public library, like the park gates, are not closed in the face of any citizen seeking entrance, certain segments of the population have traditionally found the library unwelcoming and indifferent to their needs . . . They include the less educated, the less affluent, the non-white and the no longer young."

I would like to examine some of the interests, needs, and concerns of rural Native Americans which arise out of their socio-economic and cultural position in the United States today and propose some positive steps that librarians could take in order to serve and respond to their Native American patrons. I must add, however, that I regret speaking as though there were one set of circumstances, one social environment, one culture which can be referred to as "American Indian," and I realize that any observations or proposals made in this context may be justifiably labelled generic. As Michael Dorris said:

"Few non-Indians truly realize what every Native American knows absolutely: that historically, culturally, philosophically, legally, and in many other respects, tribes really are distinct and it is in their unique qualities that their strengths and traditions reside. Indians are not a single ethnic group and show no signs of becoming one."

As previously mentioned, most American Indians residing on tribal lands struggle to raise their families, educate themselves, and maintain their cultures from within the lowest economic stratum in US society. The poverty and social despair seen on some reservations is a type that white Americans usually

associate with third world countries. Even within my home state of New Mexico where mineral, timber, and recreational resources have contributed to a slowly rising standard of living among at least some of the tribal groups, there is a high percentage of unemployment and nutritional and other health disorders associated with poverty. Far worse, in these tribes and many other tribes throughout the United States, there are the overwhelming symptoms of psychological turmoil among young people which manifests itself in the high drop-out rate from school, in abuse of alcohol and drugs, and in an escalating suicide rate. The situation among those tribes that have been deprived of their culture, their language and, correspondingly, their self-esteem, as well as any opportunities to improve their socio-economic status, is extreme. As expressed in the Atlas of the North American Indian.

"Many factors account for these conditions: unproductive land; lack of capital; lack of education; a cycle of poverty difficult to escape; and cultural dislocation and depression caused from an existence as a conquered people within a historically alien culture."

On certain levels, the socio-economic factors impacting negatively on Indian reservations simply reflect the situation which affects much of rural America. In a less statistically verifiable way, the problems are indicative of pervasive social bias and a historical and contemporary pattern of oppression, repression, and neglect imposed both consciously and subconsciously on the original inhabitants of this country. This has opened the widest abyss between the white and the Indian cultures. Consequently, librarians wishing to reach out to Native Americans in their area should be willing not only to provide books, materials, and services that will answer practical needs for information and educational skills development, but they must also be willing to examine their collections, programs, attitudes, and pre-conceptions for signs of racial and cultural bias and condescension. In addition, public libraries situated in areas that include reservations or other large communities of Native Americans should attempt to hire Indians when staff openings occur, they should build as large, accurate and comprehensive a collection of materials on local tribal histories, arts, customs, and languages as space and budget permit, and they should regularly survey the Native American community, including tribal council

members, educators, and individuals active in social organizations within the tribe, regarding particular information needs of the people.

The survey or needs assessment, based on input from tribal members, is the essential first step in creating a library program responsive to Indian concerns and interests. Charles Townley, a Native American librarian, states:

"Only Indian people can realistically evaluate the potential and actual effectiveness of alternative delivery systems, and the community is the only source of information on the opportunities and limitations imposed by its culture. Library services established without community input and approval will be rightly regarded as an insult."

The survey within the Indian community should focus not only on social, educational, job-related and health concerns of the people, but also on the desire of tribal members to have access to materials documenting the history and contemporary activities of their people. It should ascertain the need for large print, easy adult reading, and audiovisual materials in English and when possible, within the native language for persons who have difficulty with reading or for whom English is a second language. It should consider the possibility of the use of non-print presentations in various formats which could facilitate educational efforts, and provide both entertainment and information in an appealing and non-intimidating manner to those members of the community who may be uncomfortable with receiving their information in printed form.

"Audio-visual materials are extremely important because of the literacy problem. Older members [of the tribes] enjoy and learn from this type of media and it is also a great aid in teaching the children since the oral culture still exists and will for some time to come."¹⁰

Attempts should be made to isolate particular subject areas in which collection development would provide critically needed practical or educational information to Native Americans: materials on career guidance and job skills descriptions; test and preparatory exercise booklets for the GED, S.A.T., and GRE or Civil Services examinations, medical books on diabetes, hypertension, etc., books discussing health and healing from a holistic, herbal, meditative perspective; straightforward and easy-to-read books and brochures on sexual relations, family relations, child care, depression, etc. Again, publications should be made available, whenever possible, in a variety of formats. While libraries may not be able to provide direct access to specific information in all

these areas, they can strive to obtain pertinent materials in some, offer referrals in others, and perhaps organize workshops or classes in the rest with the help of tribal agencies and social services. A Minnesota survey of Indian communities showed that:

"Indian people want information on how and where to find employment. They want to know about vocational training opportunities. They are very concerned about their legal and civil rights. There is a strong desire for information which will help solve the problems of health and social relations in their personal lives . . ."

The 1983 Task Force on Library and Information Services to Cultural Minorities echoes this finding:

"Cultural minorities need special information regarding housing, health and welfare assistance, educational opportunities, jobs and career counseling, legal rights, consumer and political affairs, and family counseling."

When the librarian has ascertained which information and services are most needed by the Indian community, he/she must then consider the logistics of making them available to the people. Reservations may be a considerable distance from the library, and many Indian people do not have access to a reliable form of transportation. Vocational counseling programs (arranged ideally with the cooperation of local businesses and industries), literacy classes, group tutoring sessions for students planning to take the G.E.D., study hours, audio-visual presentations, and oral history taping sessions should, if possible, be conducted on the reservation in tribal council meeting rooms, or at day-care or senior citizens' centers, or at an inter-tribal council center.

If, as would be likely in the typical rural library, there is a need for additional funds for transportation, equipment, and materials in order to implement these outreach programs, the librarian should approach the county commission, the State Library, and the library's regional office in an appeal for support. A well coordinated plan, devised with the cooperation of the tribal authorities, which can be shown to have as its aim the educational and vocational advancement of the Native American people could also provide the basis for a grant from the LSCA for the library program.

Securing or reallocating funding is an essential first step (after the needs assessment of the Indian community), so that the library does not find itself in

the position of initiating a program, putting into operation, and then having to abandon it just as it is beginning to produce some positive results. Good intentions, without the support and monies to turn them into realities, could ultimately turn into just another variation of the betrayal of trust that the American Indian has been experiencing for over 200 years.

The limited access to books and periodicals experienced by rural mothers with young children, the homebound, and the elderly, is exacerbated on the reservation by the physical and psychological distance that the residents must travel in order to make use of the non-Indian community library. Although some reservations do receive bookmobile services or are depositories for circulating collections, these services, because of time and space constraints, can only provide limited connections between Indian patrons and desired informational or recreational reading sources. The rural librarian should work with tribal officials to set up a phone link between the Indian community and the library, so that individuals can relay requests for tapes, printed materials, periodical articles, or answers to specific reference questions. Then the desired information can be conveyed over the phone, or materials can be taken to the reservation on a weekly basis or whenever programs are scheduled to occur.

Those libraries which own or have access to a microcomputer and printer might further assist the American Indian patron in using the library's collection by the generation of subject-specific bibliographies. (This would require the use of a word processing package or bibliography-building software such as "Bibliography Writer" for an Apple or "Pro-Cite" for an IBM PC.) Titles in certain areas of the collection which are consistently used by students during the school year for term papers or science projects, or which are searched often or used in a reference context by adult readers (medicine, local history, and natural history) could be entered on disk and indexed by subject so that the librarian could easily create topical bibliographies. These could be made available to teachers and students in reservation schools or could serve as a way to inform the tribe about materials that are available at the library on the tribal history, Native American culture in general, current publications which touch upon government relations with tribal peoples, on tales in the children's

collection which give a positive and accurate view of Indian culture and history, etc.

Because of the need of Native Americans for access to Federal and State publications which discuss issues impacting on their lives and their lands, rural public libraries near Indian Country should investigate the possibility of setting up a cooperative network linked to whichever state institution (usually the State University or State Library) functions as a depository for government documents. The depository librarian should be able to make arrangements to provide the rural libraries with lists of those publications issued by Federal agencies which would be pertinent to Native American affairs, and he/she can also provide information on how the documents can be made available to the librarian and to the tribe (e.g., ILL, TELEFAX, direct purchase). The rural librarian might also contact State legislators from the district as well as the congressman, with the request that they provide the library with selected government publications as a service to their constituents.

If access to Federal publications is expressed as a high priority by tribal officials, a rural library network might decide to purchase the equipment necessary to establish an online link-up with DIALOG for the purpose of searching The Monthly Catalog (Acquiring a password to DIALOG costs \$25 per year, the cost for accessing The Monthly Catalog is \$35 per hour). This might be feasible only for libraries or networks which already own an appropriate computer terminal and modem. However, evidence that there would be heavy use by federally recognized tribes might form the basis of a request for a Federal grant for the necessary equipment.

It cannot be emphasized enough that these documents are of great importance to a people whose everyday lives are so profoundly affected by government policies. Department of the Interior, B.I.A., B.L.M., Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services publications provide information on issues such as: water, mineral, timber, and grazing rights; challenges to tribal sovereignty; changes in the health, education, and welfare services offered by the Federal government; and results of environmental studies. Public libraries receiving State support will have on hand the updated State Statutes which are essential information sources on

issues of taxation and law. Lotsee Patterson Smith (speaking to a Congressional committee about the American Indian need to establish and run their own libraries), communicated tribal officials' desire that they might have easy access to State documents ". . . to refer to when we are discussing matters of interest to the tribe. We want copies of the State laws so that we can see what they say and we don't have to take somebody else's word."¹³ When tribes do not yet have their own libraries, it is surely part of the mission of the public library serving the community to provide access to these documents in keeping with the Office of Library Outreach Service's goal ". . . to promote provision of service to the urban and rural poor of all ages including minority persons who may experience discrimination . . . [and] those isolated by cultural differences."¹⁴

The funds for the acquisition and classification of these books and documents and for the publications of newsletters alerting tribal groups to their existence should be made a permanent part of the rural library's budget. This is in line with the "equity at issue" statements made by the Committee on Minority Concerns to the ALA council in 1987 which encouraged ". . . the incorporation of minority programs and services into the regular library budgets in all types of libraries."¹⁵

Insofar as the rural public library operates as a community information center for its patrons, maintaining files on local community agencies, health, medical and social services, special interest organizations, and local government offices and officials, it should provide tribal groups with access to these records and with a system for providing referrals to needed services and information sources. Again, communication lines between tribal agencies or individuals active in Indian community affairs should be established, so that the library knows which people on the reservation should be contacted about new or changed programs, and so that representatives of tribal senior citizen, day-care, family-counseling, and health-maintenance centers are aware of the extent to which they can obtain information on community services through the library. Updated lists of phone numbers and addresses of agencies, government offices, hot-lines and crisis centers should be supplied to reservation officials on at least a yearly basis.

This provision of practical information and programs to the Native American community is just one type of service the rural public library can perform for the Indian people that it seeks to serve. Perhaps more important, in terms of the traditional mission of the public library, is the library's decision to become a repository of books, manuscripts, tapes, periodicals and other materials documenting and reflecting the history, the biographies, the spiritual, artistic, and cultural legacies and the contemporary achievements and socio-economic status of Native Americans from the region. This information is essential not only to Indians who are seeking to broaden their knowledge about their tribal heritage or about their historical connections with other tribal groups, but also to all of the library's patrons who may be uninformed or misinformed about the history of European and American interactions with the Native Americans on this continent or to those who wish to learn more about the rich plethora of traditions, customs, languages, and beliefs of the more than 260 (recognized) tribes in the United States.

Access to accurate information about their own and related tribal cultures serves more than an educational purpose for Indian people.

"Information related to what is variously termed 'cultural reinforcement' or 'cultural identity' is integral to the struggle for racial equality and self-determination. In a society where the educational system and media are dominated by whites, people of color often receive a biased and limited view of their own culture and history."¹⁶

Viewing contact with literature of one's culture from a more personal standpoint, the "Task Force on Library and Information Services to Minorities" says:

"Cultural minorities need a body of literature (archival materials, legal documents, books by and for minority groups members) of their own, and a knowledge of their cultural heritage to fortify pride in their heritage and to boost their self esteem."¹⁷

In order to best develop a core collection of Native American literature, librarians should seek guidance on acquisitions from local tribal members, from current bibliographies (the bibliography in the 4th edition of The Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian might be a good place to start) and from other librarians in the region who have already developed a quality collection of

titles by and about Native Americans. Initially, emphasis should be placed on acquiring: 1) reputable scholarly works which discuss the pre-historic origins and ancestors of local tribes, 2) works which describe, accurately and respectfully, Indian dances, music, arts, crafts, and literatures, 3) translations (and original texts when available) of folk tales and legends, 4) accounts of rites and ceremonies which do not trespass on the private and sacred nature of the rituals, 5) studies of plant and animal lore and of traditional medicines, 6) analyses of current issues in education and social welfare, 7) analyses of government policies affecting tribal status and lands, 8) any works--fiction, poetry, biography, essays, etc.--by local Indian authors, and 9) works expressing the opinions and the activities of activist Indian groups. When local materials have been acquired on a comprehensive level, the library should begin collecting important works by and about Native Americans throughout North America.

An essential program for any library attempting to serve a Native American population is the recording of oral histories--the memories, the collective and esoteric knowledge of the appropriate, in English. Obviously, in order for this to succeed, the librarian must demonstrate to the tribe and the individual that he/she respects and honors their traditions and culture and that the interest in preserving their histories is based on a shared concern that this legacy might be lost to future generations. It is also important that any individuals who express a wish to commit their stories, observations, and reflections to tape be assured that the content of the recording will be determined by them and that their wishes to avoid reference to certain topics will be respected absolutely.

If the librarian has researched the person's culture sufficiently to guide the recording session with insight and sensitivity, and if she provides a comfortable and non-inhibiting environment for the session (the home of the individual or of the librarian, perhaps), he/she may discover that the Indian neighbors have an incalculable contribution to make to the library collection and the region's history. The Native American, in turn, may find that the library will provide a safe and enthusiastically maintained repository for the vital records of his or her culture. Indians are universally concerned that critical elements of their ceremonies, traditions, language, and spiritual heritage that

exist within the memories of the elders of the tribes could be lost unless they are recorded in print or on tape.

"All of them want to get their oral history recorded by video and audio methods . . . it should be a priority so we can preserve this culture for posterity."¹⁸

When developing a special collection of Native American materials, the librarian should pay special attention to the quality of the materials in the children's section which depict the American Indian. Unfortunately, children's literature, which addresses the lives and histories of minorities is often guilty of stereotyping and, therefore, fostering racial and ethnic prejudice in vulnerable minds. Sometimes the librarian finds it difficult to recognize the lack of understanding or bias which may underlie a colorful story (written, perhaps, with the best of intentions and a large portion of naivety). Luckily, a superb periodical called Interracial Books for Children, exists for librarians to consult. It reviews books and nonprint materials, makes recommendations, and alerts the librarian to works which convey erroneous, condescending or denigrating messages about Native Americans and other minorities.

The rural public librarian who seeks to institute a program to serve the Native Americans in the community may find it necessary to attempt several different outreach efforts before receiving any response. The librarian may have to develop new projects or alter old programs in order to provide services useful and acceptable to Indian patrons. Inevitably the question will arise as to how to meet the information requirements and program needs of this segment of the user community without drawing limited funds and staff time away from established programs and areas of the collection which have been developed with the long-time "traditional" user in mind.

Obviously, no one wishes to undermine a program which has produced comfortable results for one which has questionable likelihood of success, especially during the era of mandatory cost/benefit analyses. The librarian must be prepared to defend requests for budget increases and realignment of priorities. The attitude to foster should be that outreach efforts to minority communities are an essential extension of the Public Library's mission to provide service to children and adults from all economic, political, racial, and ethnic groups in the community

Regarding the obligations of the state to support libraries in their efforts to provide information to the entire community, the Wisconsin Native American delegation to the 1979 "White House Conference on Library and Information Services" referred to the inability of many rural libraries to meet the needs of their various communities of users, and stated:

"It is recommended that the state investigate and propose systems (including technological and computerized systems) in such a manner that all citizens, including those in rural areas, on reservations, and in institutions have access to research and other information needed."¹⁹

As indicated in the article "Public Library Service to Native Americans in Canada and the Continental United States," it is essential that libraries work toward the acquisition of permanent increases or line item allocations in their annual budgets or apply for long-term grants when they are developing outreach programs to Native Americans or any other minority or non-traditional users of the library

"It is clear . . . that a stable source of funding is needed for libraries providing services to Native Americans. Too many of the existing programs, especially in the United States, are built on soft money or depend on larger libraries for services."²⁰

Even when operating with a generous and flexible budget, the staff will probably have to be reconciled to a certain amount of alteration in the procedures and priorities of operation in the library. When existing programs are evaluated, that some have long ago become fossilized appendages, retained out of habit, making little or no contribution to the library or its patrons. Others are the pets of one or two patrons or staff members. Still, excising these from the system may not be easy unless the library staff, board, and members of the Indian community have worked together during the formulation of the goals and objectives for serving the Indian population. The library staff should have elicited a substantial body of opinion and specific suggestions on proposed services from tribal members, and they should have visited community agencies, attended council meetings, and distributed information on the existing and proposed programs to the community.

After communication lines have been opened and after the first programs have been introduced, the rural librarian and members of the Indian community

who are participating in the library project should discuss the next steps in creating information equality for the tribe.

Until there are representatives from the tribe on the public library boards and Indian staff members within the libraries, the needs and interests of the Native American community will inevitably be subject to the usual interpretations and judgments of the white society. One of the primary recommendations of the 1987 ALA "Committee on Minority Concerns" was that libraries actively recruit minorities as employees.²¹ Marcia Nauratil emphasizes that:

"Members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented on library boards--the poor, the undereducated, racial minorities--should be recruited as trustees and for local advisory councils."²²

It is imperative that the library board and the staff of the public library reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the community served if it is to maintain its integrity of purpose and its credibility in the eyes of its patrons.

Finally, and in some ways most importantly, the service that the rural public library can render Native Americans is to aid the people in the establishment of their own libraries.

Indian communities need facilities with their own particular needs as the organizing influence and run by persons from their own tribes, places where documents for, by, and about Native Americans will be collected as a first priority, where programs can be created and run by individuals who understand not only the needs but the social context of a group.

Many Indian libraries were set up over the past decade with grants from Title IV and V of The Library Services and Construction Act, but sometimes there have been difficulties keeping them in operation. Of four Pueblo Libraries that opened during the mid 1980s in the Sandoval County area of New Mexico only one, at Pueblo de Cochiti, is now mentioned in the ALA Directory (with only three other Indian-run libraries listed in the entire state).²³ In a few of the cases libraries have closed because they have lacked firm support from the tribal councils, in other cases the libraries have succumbed to the problems which accompany insufficient funding inadequate facilities, collections or staffing, and funding.

Frequently the rural librarian will have had some experience in applying for grants in an effort to shore up her own shaky budget. Having had to struggle through the paper work involved when seeking a grant and the headache of articulating and formulating an acceptable proposal, she will be in a position to offer some assistance to her Native American counterpart who may be confronted with this overwhelming task for the first time. At the very least, she can provide moral support as they plow through one of the "how-to" manuals that purport to make the process of applying for a grant painless and even comprehensible.

When an existing tribal library is attempting to upgrade or expand its services, the rural public library may suggest a workshop presentation on the writing of a "collection development policy" or a library "mission and objectives" statement. She may be able to assist in planning the layout of the physical facilities, in training staff members in cataloguing or reference work, in setting up a literacy program, or in choosing methods for promoting the library within the Indian Community.

The establishment of the Indian library should be regarded by the rural librarian as providing the opportunity for an exchange of ideas and, possibly, programs and sources of information. Certainly the library in the Native American community should not be seen as a "competitor" but rather as an information resource with a particular mission to the Indian community and with the potential of extending and enhancing the body of knowledge and the concept of human service to all ethnic and racial groups. For his/her own people, the Native American librarian will be able to provide the most appropriate responses to those needs which arise out of the social and cultural context of the Indian person's life and she can expect immediate and relatively unrestrained feedback on the library materials and programs which address job, education, and health-related issues, in a way that a person from outside the Indian community never could.

It seems certain that Native Americans will continue to press for their right to create their own information resources and educational bases. In 1979 the "National Advisory Council on Indian Education" stated that they support

"... the determination that Indian people of all ages must have realistic access to every kind of information through community library/information centers and that such services are part of the trust responsibility for education that has been for part of the trust responsibility for education that has been for too long neglected by all government agencies, whether they be concerned with lifelong learning and literacy, job and professional training, health care, economic development or any other aspect of personal or social need."²⁴

And in 1988, Virginia Mathews and Lotsee Patterson spoke of the heightened consciousness of the importance of tribal libraries that occurred during the period when both Title IV and Title V funds were making the creation of these facilities a possibility, with the result that:

"... American Indian people now see library service as the vital factor it can be in their education, social, and economic well-being. They have seen for themselves the benefits of library support, of early childhood literacy, employment, adult education, aid to the elderly and dozens of other programs. Most likely they will not allow themselves to be deprived of it ever again."²⁵

It may seem that this paper makes an absurd and self-defeating proposal: that the rural librarian make a concerted effort to reach out to Native American Communities in his/her area, that he/she set up programs and a collection specifically designed to meet their needs and that she then expend as much effort as possible to ensure that these programs and materials will not be needed by encouraging the Indian communities to establish libraries of their own. However, the reality is that, at this point, the information need of these rural Americans are scarcely being met at all.

Having long ago discouraged Indians from pursuing their traditional ways of educating their children, of seeking a living, and of expressing and passing on their cultural histories and systems of belief, the dominant culture has offered them precious little in the way of replacements. It is through access to adequate information--about job opportunities, options in schooling, civil and property rights, programs which exist to assist the elderly and the handicapped, etc.--that Native Americans can work to improve their quality of life. This information, and referral services to other resources, is available now within our public libraries. Until it also exists in accessible forms in each Native American community, it should be the mission of the rural public librarian to make this information available in every way possible

Likewise, as the guardians of the documentation of human civilizations and actions, librarians have a responsibility to help ensure that records of traditional beliefs and ceremonies, social customs, arts and languages of the Native Americans are preserved for future generations, that their past and contemporary literatures and social commentaries are included in the general library collection, so that we can provide an accurate and comprehensive view of their rich and diverse and besieged cultures. Charles Townley puts it plainly:

“Library information services cannot solve the pressing problems of reservation [or urban Indian] life but they can provide knowledge as one problem-solving tool and at the same time serve as the repository for a cultural heritage that may otherwise be gradually lost.”²⁸

NOTES

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BLACK ILLITERACY IN THE RURAL SOUTH

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Introduction

It is generally accepted, without question, that illiteracy is a problem in the United States. Statistics vary from survey to survey and there are major disagreements about what constitutes a literate person; but it is agreed that there are vast numbers of illiterate adult citizens in America.

A new statistical report is published every few years disclosing the latest "revelation" about the United States' illiteracy rate.

In 1980, the U.S. Census Bureau, randomly announced that 99.5 percent of all adult American citizens could read and write.¹ Only two years later, Barbara Bush, the spokeswoman for a national literacy program and the wife of the vice-president of the U. S., said that 60 million Americans, or 33 percent of the adult population, are able to read or write at only a minimal level or not at all.² In 1986, the Census Bureau published another report which identified 21 million illiterates.³ Another study by a Princeton University group reported that 10 million adults were illiterate.

As you can see, the literacy issue is a very complicated and highly political one. Statistics seem to be used to prove or disprove the validity of each group's estimates.

Determining one literacy figure is, at this point, an impossible task. However, there is one point of agreement. That is that the rural south has a higher illiteracy rate than the northern U.S. For the purposes of this paper, the south consists of the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

Rural southern blacks have an even higher illiteracy rate than the rest of the south. Article after article refers to the rural black illiteracy rate. The

purpose of this paper is to define the depth and scope of the problem and its social and economic implications for rural black southerners.

In this paper, a standard of an eighth grade education will be used to define functional literacy. The choice is not based on any educational or statistical theory. It simply seems plausible that, as the world becomes more complicated, a person should at least be able to read at an eighth grade level in order to be able to fill out a job application, make change for a dollar, write a check, read a utility bill or follow a bus schedule.

Also, for this paper, a rural area will be defined as any place with a population of 2,500 or less.

"One in four southern adults never went beyond the eighth grade," concluded one research team which recently studied the illiteracy problem. "For black adults, the figure is three out of every eight."⁴

Nearly all blacks who live in rural areas live in the South. One million black families lived in the South as of the 1980 Census. They comprise the largest ethnic minority group in America--also, the most economically disadvantaged.⁵

In general terms, the functional illiteracy rate for rural blacks in 1977 was nearly five times that of non-rural whites.

In actual numbers, according to the 1980 Census, there are 435,648 black males over the age of 25 who have eight years or less of formal education. Of that total, more than half are age 60 or older. For rural black females, the total is 427,799. A little less than half of those women are over the age of 60.⁶

Rural blacks are behind other groups in numbers of individuals 25 years and older who have finished high school. In 1977, 31.5 percent of rural black males completed high school.⁷ Among black females, 30.7 percent of those age 25 or older had completed high school, compared to 61.3 percent of their white counterparts.⁸

Many black adults have not developed the basic literacy skills usually acquired through education. A study of four rural counties found that blacks had not only low education levels but little job training or work experience. These basic skills are needed in order to obtain employment that pays even a minimum wage or salary.

A more recent study shows some improvement for rural blacks in these areas but they are still lagging far behind whites.

Using the poverty level established by the 1980 Census, which is a yearly income of \$8,414 or less for a family of four, blacks in the rural South have a higher poverty rate than blacks in other regions.⁹ While the rural South contains 16.7 percent of all black families in the U.S., it has 22.2 percent of all poor black families.¹⁰

In black families headed by a female, the poverty rate is 56 percent.¹¹ Though smaller in number, households headed by black women are in worse financial condition generally than those headed by a man.¹² While rural black women generally have attained a higher level of education, they earn only about 65 percent of the income of black men (an interesting observation, but the subject of another research paper altogether).

The distribution of black households by age shows that 12 percent of black female heads of households are under 25 years of age and 29 percent are 35 years or older.¹³

Poverty falls disproportionately on minorities. Thirty-eight percent of all rural blacks are poor. That is more than triple the poverty rate among rural whites.¹⁴ Rural poverty often is not the result of unemployment. Instead, it reflects low-skill, low-pay jobs.

"Part of the disparity in education levels between white and black citizens," Ghelfi writes, "is due to the low educational attainment of older blacks."¹⁵ As was mentioned earlier, more than half of the black men and women who have not achieved an eighth grade education are 60 or older.

At the beginning of the Civil War, 95 percent of black southerners were illiterate, the principal reason being that every Confederate state had laws prohibiting the education of slaves. The first 20 years after the Civil War saw the number of black children enrolled in school increase by almost 500 percent. With the return to power of reactionary white Democrats in the elections of 1876-77 and the end of Reconstruction, whatever gains had been made toward educational equality between races stopped.

At the turn of the century, 35 years after the Civil War, half of the black population remained illiterate. At the start of World War II, 40 years later, the

figure was one-tenth of the total black population. It took 75 years for blacks to equal the literacy rate whites enjoyed at the end of the Civil War.¹⁶

There is now abundant evidence that literacy is almost exclusively acquired in school. Not surprisingly, we can see a sharply declining number of black illiterates as we move from older to younger blacks. The belief that, after slavery was abolished, large numbers of blacks acquired, on their own, basic reading and writing skills is a myth. Black illiteracy remained high; changes come slowly and only as new generations were born and attended school.

Few question the role of education in the reduction of black illiteracy. It is more difficult to establish a direct connection between education and income, surprising as that may seem. People automatically assume there is a strong correlation between educational level and income. However, reliable income data by race is a new phenomenon. Before 1940, the Census did not include racial income data. Consequently, there is a limited amount of pre-1940 data.

New industries in the rural South have tended to avoid counties with large numbers of blacks, possibly because of discrimination but more likely because the labor force is presumed to be less productive as a result of poor educational levels.¹⁷

Fewer and fewer jobs are available to those who lack basic skills. The adult without a high school education is four times as likely to be unemployed as a high school graduate.

Those counties in the South with the lowest percentage of adults who have finished the eighth grade also have the worst unemployment and the slowest economic growth rates.¹⁸ In counties with less than four percent unemployment, only an average of 13.2 percent of their adults had not gone beyond the eighth grade. By contrast, in counties with more than 16 percent unemployment (most of which are predominantly black counties), 35.3 percent of the adult population, an average, had no schooling beyond the eighth grade.¹⁹

Rural black illiteracy will not be eliminated simply by throwing money at the problem. Individuals must want to help themselves. The dropout rates of adults in basic education programs ranges from 23 percent to 48 percent.²⁰

One literacy program in Albertville, Alabama, is particularly successful. Albertville has a population of 15,000 and is the largest city in rural Marshall

County, Ala. The county population is predominantly white. Economically, it is an example of a county undergoing a gradual transformation from an agricultural county to an industrial county. As of 1980, 30 percent of the population had less than an eighth grade education.²¹

The Albertville literacy program is designed for workers from local businesses. The four employers participating from the start were Keyes Fibre Company, Arrow Shirt Company, and the City of Albertville municipal government. Each employer surveyed its employees to determine educational levels and took part in designing the curriculum.²²

Response by the employees was extremely favorable. One hundred and forty participants completed the program. The focus of the classes was basic reading, writing and mathematics skills.

Volunteer tutors worked individually with students. The employers provided classroom space, conference rooms, materials, and snacks. Classes were held after regular working hours. More than half of the students completed their high school equivalency, or GED, for which the sponsoring companies paid the \$20 examination fee. The total financial contribution of employers to the experimental program was \$40,000.

The employers renewed the project for the 1987-88 school year and four more businesses have chosen to participate.

One interesting statistic: Eighty percent of those in the program indicated they would not have participated had it not been offered where they work.²³ They would not, on their own initiative, have sought out a literacy or adult education program.

For fewer rural blacks than rural whites pursue adult education programs. In a survey taken in 1975, only 10 percent of those taking classes were black.²⁴ It is not clear whether the low participation is due to lack of opportunity, finances, or motivation.

One program that was successful in attracting blacks was Project Literacy-Memphis, Inc. As of 1980, Shelby County, Tennessee, had 80,000 adults over the age of 25 who had not completed the eighth grade. That same year, a group of citizens formed Project Literacy-Memphis, Inc.²⁵ Its stated purpose was "to seek the elimination of illiteracy and improve basic skills of the

general population in Memphis and Shelby County; to enhance and coordinate other organizations' efforts which provide literacy services in the community."

This experimental project was open to employees of the City of Memphis sanitation and parks departments. Sixteen people applied for the pilot program; 11 of them were actual non-readers and the remaining five had reading levels ranging from third to sixth grade. The students were predominantly black, male, middle-aged, and married.

All participants were paid for the 10 days they attended classes. Classes lasted eight hours a day. The students were picked up at their worksite, driven to a study center and returned to their worksite at the end of the day. Breakfast and lunch were provided. All 16 students completed the program.

The daily newspaper was a vital part of the curriculum. Teachers found that using subject matter relevant to adult learners was important to the program. It was also discovered that adult participants had a shorter attention span than originally thought. The curriculum was redesigned so that subjects were changed every 20 minutes.

All participants completed the program. The average improvement in reading level was 3.6 grade levels. Fifteen of the 15 participants signed up for follow-up classes in an adult basic education program.

The cost of the program was \$4,260. This figure does not include the students' wages for the two weeks they attended classes.

The success of the program has led to a major expansion of the project to include the long-term unemployed and prison inmates.²⁹

The obvious limitation to this program is its enormous cost. It is difficult to imagine this program being applied on a large scale and giving perhaps hundreds of adult students the same opportunities given to a handful of hand-picked participants in Memphis.

While worksite literacy programs are useful to the employed person, they do not reach the vast numbers of rural adults who are unemployed, poor whites, and blacks alike.

In North Carolina, the community colleges have been involved in the literacy campaign. The state counts as functional illiterates all adults who have

not completed eight years of formal education. Using that standard, North Carolina has 835,000 illiterates.²⁷

Business people in North Carolina were one of the first groups to see a need for an adult literacy program. Businesses estimate that they employ more than 600,000 functional illiterates.

Unlike the education of youth, who are a captive audience under states' compulsory school attendance laws, adults must want to improve their literacy skills. They have to be able to see some need for it, personal or economic, with attainable rewards for the effort. But, as we said earlier, businesses have a tendency not to locate in heavily black, rural counties.

Another problem is demographics. The largest single group of rural black illiterates is among the very old, those age 60 and over. But there are also 84,000-plus young blacks, between the ages of 16 and 24, who are illiterate. The young and the old have different needs and, often, different reasons for enrolling in literacy programs. That makes it difficult to design a program for everyone.

The elderly have different needs than a 19-year-old black female with two children to raise. Obviously, a literacy teacher is not likely to be training a 60-year-old for the workplace. Elderly rural blacks are heavily dependent on Social Security and Medicare. Such "transfer payments" from the federal government are, in fact, their chief source of income. Learning to understand a Medicare form represents a substantial accomplishment for them. A reasonable goal for a young woman of 19 would be to earn a GED diploma and acquire practical job training. But with funds limited, whose needs come first?

In 1986, the federal government appropriated about \$100 million for literacy programs. That comes to less than four dollars for every adult in the nation with less than eight years of education.²⁸

Poverty counties do not appear to be effective competitors for federal grants and other forms of aid. Rural counties lag far behind metropolitan counties in federal assistance programs. The low expenditures often prevent rural populations from reaching their educational potential.²⁹

Fewer rural black children were enrolled in preprimary programs in 1975 than any other resident group. Children attending programs such as Head

Start are proven to have an early advantage in achieving literacy. Until the black rural minority becomes as politically assertive as urban minorities, their children will continue to start their educational lives at a disadvantage.

The rural black illiteracy problem is a perplexing one. There are those who say the problem will eventually solve itself. As the population ages and those men and women born before 1920 begin to die, this argument runs, the illiteracy rates for younger blacks are not as dramatic or as shocking. But there are 53,000 young black males between the ages of 16 and 24, and some 31,000 young black females, who have only an eighth grade education. Why this is considered progress, I can't understand.

To be 65 years old and unable to read the Bible is sad. To be 20 and unable to read a telephone book is frightening.

The solution? Motivation, I suspect. Adults need to see a reason for them to improve themselves. Also, somehow, industries must be convinced of the hard-working nature of rural black communities; that rural blacks are not poor because of laziness; that most poor blacks work, they just don't make much money; that most blacks who can't read, want to read. If these industries move or expand into these communities and take a chance on the workforce, perhaps they would be pleasantly surprised. They have the example of Albertville, Alabama, where employers found that an investment in literacy was welcomed by their workers and proved to be successful.

The federal government does not seem capable, at this point, of solving the problem. Whatever money is available for federal programs generally goes to urban areas. After all, if government can have an impact on a million people or on a thousand people, most politicians would choose the former. That is not a criticism, just a political fact.

Preschool education should be stressed if we are going to combat illiteracy. Reading and writing skills are best attained in school. It is much easier and less costly to teach someone to read at age six than at age 40.

I could find no examples of rural librarians in predominantly black areas taking a leadership role in literacy programs. Economically, they probably can't. With a limited budget, only so much can be done. It is probably all they can manage just to provide an adequate public library. Logically, rural librarians

should be playing a leading role in helping their neighbors learn to read. Realistically, I don't see it happening.

Putting politics aside, if the government can do one thing well, it is to compile statistics. There must be a way to establish, as a start, a valid illiteracy rate. If a definite need can be proven, federal money could not be far behind.

The United States was one of the first countries in the world to have universal education for children. Let's extend the same opportunity to adults who somehow slipped through the system.

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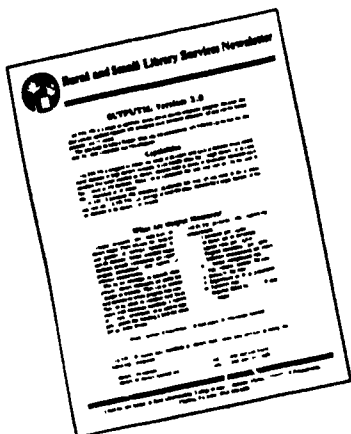
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Rural and Small Library Services NEWSLETTER

Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship
College of Library Science
Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Continuing in its mission of service to rural and small libraries, the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship announces the publication of the *Rural and Small Library Services Newsletter* a continuation of the *Rural Library Services Newsletter*, which was edited by John Houlihan in Iowa

The information explosion is an ever-present aspect of modern librarianship in libraries of all sizes serving all user groups. Yet for small libraries, frequently operating far from the influence of large metropolitan library systems, this influx of information presents special challenges. It can be difficult for librarians working in rural and small settings, often with limited quantities of time, budget, and staff, to keep up to date on issues affecting their libraries. *Rural and Small Library Services Newsletter* is prepared to fill that need.

The *Newsletter* is a collection of the latest news concerning small and rural libraries and is an effective way for the time-pressed rural librarian to get a quick yet informative summary of the news as it pertains to his or her area of the profession. The *Newsletter* gathers information relating to rural and small librarianship and presents it in a concise, readable form.

The *Rural and Small Library Services Newsletter* is an extension of the service the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship has provided to rural and small libraries through its various activities including the publication of *Rural Libraries*, a journal dedicated to examining all aspects of librarianship in the rural context.

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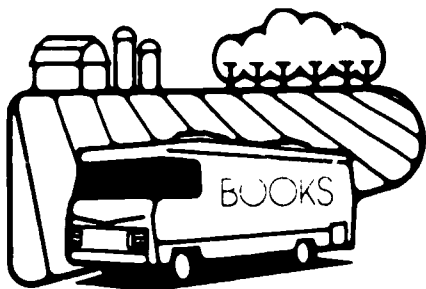
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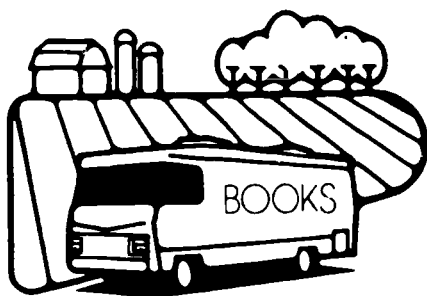
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William D. Campbell is a Professor of Accountancy at the College of Business Administration at Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

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THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT'S EFFECTS ON LIBRARY SERVICE: A CONSULTANT'S PERSPECTIVE

Gardner C. Hanks
Continuing Education Consultant
Idaho State Library
Boise, ID

In 1979, I was hired as a public library consultant for seven small town libraries in Iowa. Two years later I was hired by the Viking Library System in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, to work with eleven rural libraries. I worked in this position for seven and a half years. Through this experience, I became a participant-observer of the rural environment and its effects on library services. To a large extent this paper is based on this experience.

All institutions work in the context of their social and economic environment. This applies to public libraries as much as to any other agency. It is important, therefore, for those who seek to promote change in libraries to understand the milieu in which that library operates.

Those who provide consulting services to rural libraries, then, must understand these libraries in the context of the rural setting. The purpose of this article is to summarize the important elements of the rural environment, and to suggest how these elements affect rural public libraries. It will also discuss how these elements affect the work of the consultant with these libraries.

General Historical Trends

Generalizations must always be tested against actual experience, and this is especially true when discussing the rural environment in the late 1980s. The news from the country over the past few years has largely been negative: the farm crisis of the middle of the decade, followed by drought in the latter part of the 80s. This was a marked contrast from the 1970s.

For the first time in several decades, the 1970s showed something of resurgence in the rural economy and population. Four and a half million people

left cities to earn a living in the country.¹ Farm prices were relatively high, and many of the young fled the troubled urban areas to try to find a quieter, more relaxed lifestyle on homesteads and hobby farms. Many older people also sought retirement homes in the country.

The 1970s "rural renaissance" only affected selected areas, however.² Areas remote from the conveniences and cultural advantages of urban life did not prosper as much as those closer to the cities. Areas without recreational attractions such as lakes or mountains did less well than those which had these advantages to offer tourists and retirees. The 1970s rural renaissance, in other words, was not a universal phenomenon.

Similarly, the bad news of the 80s has not affected all communities equally. Communities that offer "the amenities" have not suffered as much as the areas that were heavily dependent on farming or mineral extraction. Indeed, many of these more attractive communities have not suffered at all, but have shown both economic and population growth.

The Rural Decline. In spite of the above caveat, it is not unreasonable to say that the twentieth century has been a difficult time for America's rural areas. The 1880 Census demonstrated that changes were occurring in the rural environment, when it reported that for the first time the percentage of the U.S. population living on America's farms had fallen below 50%.³ Over the intervening decades the number has continued to fall rapidly, until now only 2% of America's population lives on farms.⁴

This decline has many causes, but perhaps the most important has been the development of agricultural technology. The invention of McCormick's reaper, the farm tractor, and the self-propelled combine each meant that less people were needed to farm the same number of acres. Farms, therefore, grew larger. While it was not unusual for farm families in the 18th century to work as little as forty acres, the average size farm had grown to 165 acres in 1935, and to 433 acres by 1982.⁵ Similarly, once the movement west no longer provided an ever increasing supply of land, the growth of farm size was only possible by the removal of some farm families to other occupations. Thus, while in 1960 there were four million

farms in the United States, by 1982 the number had dropped to 2.4 million.⁶

An improved transportation system also contributed to the decline in the rural population. With the coming of the railroads and then the automobile, rural people became less dependent on their own small towns to provide them with the goods and services they needed or wanted. The mail order catalog cut into the profitability of running the small town general store, and the automobile made trips to larger cities more convenient. Small town businesses found themselves in competition with the chain stores located in larger communities, stores that could beat their price because they could buy in volume. This competition, combined with the declining farm population, closed the doors of many small town businesses. This, in turn, led the small town to be even less attractive as a place to shop, as fewer and fewer goods were available in it. Caught in this vicious cycle, the smallest towns became little more than a gas station or a wide spot in the road.

Improved transportation and communication led to another factor in the decline of rural America. The younger generations who visited the metropolis to shop or get a higher education or as part of their military service came to see it as a place of excitement and opportunity. The World War I song "How You Going to Keep Them Down on the Farm, After They've Seen Patee?" applied just as much to American cities like Chicago or Kansas City or even smaller towns, like Peoria or Mankato. This was particularly true as the opportunities in farming became less and less plentiful.

Rural Population Traits

The general decline in rural America has created a rural population that is significantly different from the population of America as a whole. The four most important differences are that the rural population is older; it is less educated; it is poorer; and it is socially and politically more conservative.

Age The 1980 Census showed that the number of people aged 65 or older represented 12.3% of the non-metropolitan population as compared to only 10.9%

of the population as a whole. In counties that contained no town larger than 2500 people, the rate climbed to 13.5% of the population.⁷

Equally important with the number of people classified as aged, however, is the median age of the population. The median age is the number of years at which half the population is older and half younger. The 1980 Census indicated that the median age of the rural farm population was 35.8 years, and for towns between 1000 and 2500 in population it was 31.8 years. This compared to the national median age of 30.0 years.⁸ By 1988 the median age for rural people had increased to 33.1 years, compared to 32.2 for urban people; the median age for people living on farms had risen to 38 years.⁹ In 1920, the median age for farm people was less than 21 years.¹⁰

As stated above, one cause of this difference has been the migration of the young from rural areas to the cities. A second cause has been the attractiveness of some rural areas to retirees. Typically, the cost of living in rural areas is cheaper, the pace is slower, and the crime rate lower than in urban settings. These factors make rural areas attractive to people living on relatively fixed incomes and who find the pace of change in the modern American city uncomfortable.

The older population in rural areas can have several important affects on rural library service. First, older adults typically have developmental needs that differ from those of younger adults and children, and these needs may be reflected in the kind of library materials in which they will be interested. As adults prepare for and enter into retirement, they frequently become more interested in leisure time activities, money management, and health issues. Religion may become more important to some older people, and frequently older people look for ways to assess and evaluate their lives. They may find historical materials, both fiction and non-fiction, dealing with the period of their own life span to be valuable to them in this process.

In addition to the different interests older adults bring to the library, their economic situation may also affect their willingness to pay for governmental services, such as libraries. Many older people live on social security payments and

pensions, and this money is an important part of the rural economy. In nearly half of Kansas' counties, for example, 44% of personal income was derived from transfer payments, such as social security, or property income.¹¹

Income derived from these sources is relatively fixed, and therefore older people may be more resistant to tax increases to pay for improved library services. Older people are also more likely to vote. It therefore is vitally important for the rural library to effectively reach out to this politically powerful part of its population.

Education. As might be expected with an older population, the level of education in rural areas is lower than in the nation as a whole. The 1980 Census showed that 60.4% of the rural population had graduated from high school, compared to the national figure of 66.5%, and while 16.2% of the general population had four years or more of college, only 11.0% of the rural population had this much higher education.¹²

We must be very careful in interpreting these figures, however. The rural population is older, and previous generations were less likely to attend school through the secondary level. This accounts for part of the difference. Secondly, "education" in census terms is only measured by years of schooling. Many older people may not have been able to continue through high school, yet have educated themselves through independent reading or attendance at informal educational activities, such as those put on by agricultural extension or community education programs.

Still, it is not completely inaccurate to say that the rural population may place less value on educational agencies, such as libraries, than the population as a whole. It is not at all uncommon when talking to rural librarians to hear of a mayor, city council member, or county commissioner who has stated with evident pride that he had never read a book, and it had not hurt him. It is less likely that one will hear this kind of statement from urban officials who must answer to a more cosmopolitan constituency.

Typically, however, many of the rural people with whom I have worked expressed more of an ambivalence toward educational agencies than an active

hostility to them. Most believed that it was essential that their young be well-educated. At the same time, they realize that it is education that might lead the young to move away, seeking the greater opportunities for which school has prepared them. Rural people are also suspicious of the cost of education, seeing much in the schools that they consider wasteful or unnecessary.

How then should rural public libraries deal with these feelings on the part of their public? First, they need to avoid being trapped into being considered merely educational. They must work not to be seen as a adjunct to the school system. They can do this by providing practical information that can have an immediate impact on individuals and the life of the community. For example, two of the most useful services provided by rural libraries are tractor repair manuals for farmers and training videos for volunteer fire departments. In both of these cases, the services meet a vital economic or social need of the library's target population.

A second way that libraries can meet the ambivalent rural feelings about education is to be well managed. Writing long-range plans, presenting well thought out budgets and annual reports, developing written policies, and having its financial records independently audited each year will help the library establish itself as a well-run, efficient organization. While this will not allay all criticisms, it will blunt them and can help win the majority of the population to the library's side.

Poverty. Despite the fact that poverty in the United States is usually pictured in its more urban settings, the 1980 Census showed that rural people were more likely to be poor than their urban counterparts. The rural population below the national poverty level was measured at 13.2%, while the nation as a whole had a 12.1% poverty level. It should be remembered that this measure was taken during a more prosperous period for rural people. In 1986 the poverty rate for farm residents stood at 19.6%, but in 1987 it had declined dramatically to 12.6%.¹³

What causes poverty in rural areas? Certainly, the relatively unstable economic conditions have something to do with it. Farming and mining tend to

run in boom or bust cycles. When the bust comes people lose their farm or are thrown out of work. Many then leave for the city, but others stay on, unemployed and poverty stricken.

The lower level of education also contributes, since a higher percentage of rural people have fewer skills which can be transferred from one job setting to another. Thus, when a poorly educated farmer or miner must seek a different means of support, he frequently will not fare well in the competitive market place.

Traditionally, public libraries have been middle class institutions, and their services have been directed toward the middle class. Whether small libraries can ever become major players in helping the poor is questionable. Still, there are many services that can be provided. Literacy programs, providing space for outreach services, such as the Women, Infant, Children (WIC) nutrition program, and providing community information and referral all can be positive services for the poor.

Conservatism Summarizing some findings of the sociology of rural communities, Susan Rafferty stated: "Rural communities tend to be more traditional in moral orientation, less accepting of minority rights, more ideologically religious and conservative, more likely to oppose the intervention of federal and state governments, and are generally more satisfied with their present life-style."¹⁴

The rural library consultant must understand the conservatism of the rural environment both as it affects the library itself, and the library's approach to change. On the one hand, the conservatism will be reflected in the kind of support the library can expect from its community. There typically will be a greater emphasis on volunteerism rather than in providing more tax money for special projects or even basic services. The library may also be seen as the special province of women because it fits into the traditional role for middle class women as the "cultural guardians" of the community. Old and inadequate library buildings may be kept for their "historic" value. Censorship attempts from conservative religious groups may be more prevalent.

As a governmental agency, the library may also be suspect in some minds. State, federal and even local laws may be regarded as mere technicalities passed by politicians who do not understand rural problems. It may be considered perfectly legitimate to ignore these laws if obeying them would be inconvenient. Federal and state programs for libraries may be viewed with suspicion.

The consultant must remember that rural librarians and library board members probably share some or all of these attitudes. These people are part of the community in which they live, and they are not immune from its values, even if they reject some of them. When consultants suggest a change, then, they must look beyond the actual change that they seek to what this change may represent symbolically to those to whom it is proposed. Even a simple change such as moving from self-produced to purchased catalog card sets, for example, may be seen as counter to the conservative self-reliance in which a librarian or a library board believes.

Consultants, therefore, must be aware of the symbolic implications of any change they are promoting. They should also recognize that in asking a librarian or a library board to make a change, they may be asking them to challenge long and deeply held community values, values which the librarian or board members themselves may never have before questioned. When this occurs, empathy and patience are vital. Changes under these circumstances will not occur overnight.

I was once told by an experienced, rural minister that major changes in rural areas typically take at least five years to accomplish. In my experience this has been true. In my fifth year as a library consultant with the Viking Library System in Minnesota, the changes I had been suggesting for a number of libraries began to occur. The remarkable thing about this was that the suggested changes were in many different areas. one library began a major weeding program, another moved from a volunteer library to one with paid staff, and a third began a building remodelling. In each case I had been actively promoting the change for at least three years.

Rural consulting programs, then, must be seen as long term endeavors. LSCA projects that put a rural library consultant in place for a year or two are

not likely to make much difference in the long run. Nor should new consultants or their employers set unreasonable goals for major changes within the first three or four years of the service. During this period it is best to evaluate a consultant's performance in terms of trust building and smaller technical achievements, rather than the major long-term changes that are envisioned. New consultants that are moving into established consulting programs will be able to make changes more quickly, but even in these cases, there will need to be a period of building trust.

This is particularly true when the consultants are seen as representatives of the state government, or it is known that they are being paid through state or federal funds. State and federal programs are viewed with suspicion by rural people, often justifiably so. It is not unusual for state consultants to be viewed with fear. Librarians or board members may think that the consultants are there only to enforce laws or regulations of which they are unaware, or they may know that they are in violation of state law or rules, and fear that the consultant is there simply to force compliance. It may take the consultant many months to overcome being viewed in this way, and unless there can be fairly frequent contact, it may be impossible to ever completely overcome it.

A Typology of Small Towns

Thus far, we have been discussing the rural environment in a general way. In reality, the values and interests in rural America can be widely divergent. Different towns, even within a small geographical area, can be vastly different from each other. Susan Rafferty has identified six different kinds of rural communities, including the government-trade communities, the university-professional communities, the industry dominated communities, the tourism communities, the retirement communities, and the resource-based boom towns.¹⁴ The following discussion is based on Rafferty's classification, but expands it by adding a seventh classification: the stagnant farm community. While the classifications are primarily Rafferty's, the discussion of these community types is my own, as are the implications I draw from them.

Government-trade communities. A government-trade community might also be referred to as a regional trade center. They are typically county seats, but they serve people from surrounding counties as well. Thus, not all county seats fall into this category, but only those that serve as a regional center for state and federal programs and that provide major retail shopping resources. Typically, the population of such communities ranges up from about 10,000, although some may be smaller in less densely populated areas.

It is not unusual for the libraries and librarians in government-trade communities to provide leadership to the library community in the region. Typically, the librarians have professional credentials, and will regard the library consultant as a peer rather than as a leader. Occasionally, librarians in these communities may even regard attempts to provide consulting services as an intrusion on their professional autonomy. However, they may also look to the consultant as one of the few people who understands the purpose of the library and what the librarian is trying to accomplish.

University-professional communities. Rafferty's university-professional communities might be better called college communities for it is more likely that the community will have a college rather than a university in it. While government-trade communities may also have colleges, this kind of community is distinguished by the dominance of the college in the economic and social life of the community. In the government-trade center, the college is just one of several important institutions; in the university-professional community, it is the most important institution. The size of this kind of community typically ranges up from 5000.

In university-professional community, the population will usually be better educated and more sophisticated library users. They are likely to expect more from the library, and support for the library is usually good. In some cases, however, the presence of a large college or small university library that is open to the general public may hurt the support for the public library, since local officials can feel that there is less need for a good public library if other resources are available.

Typically, librarians in university-professional communities are professionally trained, and will regard a library consultant much as those librarians who serve government-trade communities. An important issue for this kind of library is cooperation with the academic library. As an outsider, the consultant may be asked to serve in the role of go-between or arbitrator in this relationship.

Industry dominated communities. Industry dominated communities are communities whose economic life is controlled by a single company. A more common term might be "company town." Industry dominated communities can be virtually any size, although typically they range up from several thousand. To a large extent, the character of the community will be determined by the character of the industry. In rural areas the industries are usually based on agricultural products and involve relatively unskilled labor, but in some cases the industry may employ a large skilled labor or professional work force.

To a great extent, support for the library in an industry dominated community will depend on the industry. If the industry is supportive of community development, representatives of the management of the industry or their spouses will likely seek positions on the library board. In these circumstances the library is likely to do well. If the industry is not interested in the community except as a cheap place for its facility, the library will probably suffer. The library's level of support will also be significantly affected by the fiscal health of the company. If the company is thriving, the library will do better; if the company is in trouble, the library is likely to have trouble too.

Depending on the size of the community and library support, librarians in industry dominated communities may or may not be professionally trained. Whether they view the consultant as a peer or more in a leadership role will be determined by their own education and experience.

Tourism communities. Tourism communities are communities whose economies are significantly affected by the tourism industry. It is not unusual for the populations of these communities to vary significantly between seasons, and the needs and interests of the influx of tourists may be quite different from those of the permanent residents.

Tourism communities can be quite small, though they typically have at least a thousand full time residents. The tourist season typically brings large increases to the size of the community--sometimes doubling the permanent population.

Libraries in tourist communities face the issue of how to treat tourists. It is not unusual for the library to offer its services at little or no cost to "summer people". In these cases the library is seen as one of the amenities that draws these people and their money to the community. Libraries in these situations are under pressure to meet the recreational needs of tourists, and sometimes neglect the needs of the permanent residents.

At other times, libraries may be hesitant to serve tourists, because of their transient status. When this occurs, boards may establish relatively high non-resident fees, and are more likely to focus on the library needs of permanent residents.

Retirement communities. Retirement communities can be of two types. First, there is the community that offers amenities, such as lakes, that are particularly attractive to retired people. These communities are likely to attract a fairly well-off older population--a population that might migrate at different times of the year to different parts of the country. The second type of retirement community is the smaller farm community where retired farmers may live after they leave their farms. In either case, the population of this kind of community is much older even than the more typical rural community.

Retirement communities, particularly those serving a fairly transient population face many of the same issues as in the tourism community. Since retirees typically own property, there is no question that they deserve library service on the same basis as other residents, however. Another issue that frequently occurs in retirement communities is whether "snow birds" should be encouraged to serve on library boards. Should people who will be gone three or more months each year be board members? To allow them to serve may make it difficult to make a quorum "out of season." Not to allow them, however, may cut the library off from a powerful and hard working constituency.

Resource-based boom towns. Boom towns are found in areas that are rich

in natural resources, such as minerals or forests. These are much like industry dominated towns, but more likely to experience violent shifts in fortune due to the nature of their industries. Such towns are likely to experience "boom or bust" cycles, which are dependent on world prices for the product they produce.

Libraries in this type of community may also experience the boom or bust syndrome. Doing very well when the community is thriving, and doing badly when the bust comes. In this kind of community, one important library need is to find a way to provide a more stable level of service.

The stagnant farm community. This is the typical smaller community in rural America. It is a community built to serve the needs of its area's farmers. As farms grew bigger, there have been fewer people to serve, and competition from larger towns have further reduced these communities' circumstances. Typically, these towns have been slowly losing population. They range downward from about 5,000 in population. Their populations are older, and to some extent they have become retirement communities for the less wealthy.

Because these towns have experienced loss, they are likely to be conservative. Libraries in this kind of community may save large portions of their budgets, as a "rainy day" fund, even though their operating budget is pitifully small. Similarly, they may resist weeding older books, because they don't believe that they will ever be able to replace them. In some cases, they may keep a very poor library going, because to close it would represent a blow to already-wounded community pride.

Library service in these communities will be hard pressed to keep up, as it competes with other public services for a smaller and smaller amount of available tax dollars. Yet the library may also make a significant contribution to community life, if it can provide information that will help with economic development.

These libraries are very rarely directed by professional librarians, and the consultant will likely be looked to for leadership both by the staff and the board after a trusting relationship is created.

Further Diversifying Factors

Even within these general types of rural communities, a wide variety can be expected. Factors that will affect this diversity will be the geography of the community, the racial and ethnic mix of the population, the history of the community, its religious life, the number, type, and vitality of community organizations, and the quality of community leadership.

The important thing for the consultant to remember is that although rural communities may have many things in common, no two are the same. Each must ultimately be treated as an individual case.

Finding Information About the Community

When a library consultant enters a library's life, it is essential that she or he see the library in the context of the community it serves. To expect a librarian or library board to reject a strongly held community value for the sake of improved library service, for example, is not a reasonable expectation. Therefore, the consultant should spend time to find out about the library's community.

Information about any community is available from a number of sources, some formal and some informal:

Community Studies. In library schools and professional journals, much is made of community surveys or community analyses. While such studies could be very valuable, they are rarely done. This is due primarily to the amount of time such studies take to complete. Most library consultants simply do not have the time to complete such studies for all of the libraries with which they work. Similarly, librarians and library boards are rarely interested in spending the time necessary to make a formal study.

However, in some communities there are other agencies that may have put together this kind of information in a formal way. Agricultural extension offices, for example, sometimes carry out community studies. Chambers of Commerce also collect information on the community, although their reports may be colored by the purpose of attracting new businesses to the area. Such reports can be useful reading for the consultant, even though they are not directly library related.

Census Information and State Statistics. The U.S. Census provides valuable statistical information on virtually every county and city in the country. In addition to population size, information on the age, educational level, and social traits is also provided. The Census itself updates this information periodically between the national census held each decade. Much of this data for individual counties and cities appears in The County and City Data Book, which is published annually by the U.S. Government Printing Office. Other information is available in a variety of reports issued by a variety of federal agencies. State agencies also can provide valuable statistical information on rural communities. This information often is most accessible in newspaper articles and other popular media reports.

Local Newspapers. Library consultants should try to get and read the local newspapers serving their libraries' communities. Although it is true that small town newspapers do not always report the most important news in a community, they do report important public events. If nothing else, knowing the public news for a community can serve as a conversation starter, and it may open up the way to learn about the "news behind the news."

A Drive-around or Walk-around. Much can be learned about a community simply by driving around or walking around in it. The number of empty stores on Main Street, for instance, will tell the consultant about the economic condition of the community. The number, type, and name of churches may not only reveal the religious character of the community, but also its ethnic heritage. Observation of the people on the streets can tell one about the age and racial make-up of the community. Observation of businesses and traffic patterns tell much about the economic life of the community.

Observation can also tell the consultant about the deeper values of community life. For instance, once an outsider commented to me about the cluttered condition of one of the libraries I served. I asked her if she had looked around the community. Struggling to survive, and with much of its population living through the Great Depression, a strong community value was not to throw anything away. The town was cluttered with old automobiles and farm

machinery, salvaged lumber and bricks. The library's condition, which reflected the staff's reluctance to throw away old books, pamphlets, or magazines, was simply a reflection of this larger community value.

Conversation. The most valuable tool in gathering community information, however, will be conversation. If the consultant shows an interest in the community's life, people will be glad to talk about it. The librarian will be the person the consultant knows best, and therefore will usually be the most valuable source of conversational information. However, it is not at all unusual for others to join in this kind of conversation, if it is being held in the public area of the library. As the library consultant becomes more and more well-known in the community, more people will come forward to serve as community informants. This should allow for a broader perspective than could be gained just from talking to the librarian.

Conclusion

While knowledge of the general condition of rural America is a valuable tool for the rural library consultant, it is important for consultants to see the variations that exist between small towns even within the same county. As with any people-oriented job, library consultants face the challenge of recognizing individual differences while developing programs for a number of libraries that share many similarities. It is this challenge, however, that makes consulting interesting, and on those occasions when the challenge is successfully met, it is one of its most gratifying experiences.

NOTES

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⁴U.S. Bureau of the Census, jointly with the Department of Agriculture, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 439, Rural and Rural Farm Population, 1988 (Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 3

⁵Rosenfeld, Rachel Ann Farm Women: Work, Farm, and Family in the United States (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 12.

⁶Ibid.

⁷U.S. Bureau of the Census Demographic and Socioeconomic Aspects of Aging in the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), 41.

⁸U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1980 Census of Population: General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), 1-67.

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PLANNING MULTITYPE SERVICES IN A RURAL ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

In 1987-88 the researcher studied a newly-formed multitype library system in rural southeast Alabama to determine which cooperative activities to provide during the first years. The methodology worked so well that the researcher and the system's director felt it could be beneficial to other librarians' efforts. A description of the study is presented to help in planning cooperative services for both single and multitype library systems. The methodology can also be considered for the planning or needs assessment of individual libraries working with other community agencies.

Background

The fifteen county area encompassed by the new multitype library system is characterized by small and medium-sized communities in close proximity, allowing for potential cross use of libraries by residents. Cooperation among the different types of libraries had not been developed prior to 1985, when forty-one of the area's academic, special, school, and public libraries systems joined together to form a cooperative system, which became the Southeast Alabama Multitype System (SAMS).¹

In October of 1985 the District Assembly, made up of delegates representing each of the system's members, elected a Board of Trustees to develop the system. In April of 1987 a director was appointed, and the system began operation. The director decided that its members should determine the system's activities during the first phase, and the researcher, a member of the faculty at the University of Alabama's School of Library and Information Studies, was employed to assess the system's needs.

Description of Libraries

The eleven academic libraries included five four-year and three two-year state supported and three private church-related colleges. Current statistics show these libraries ranging in volumes owned from 205,357 to 16,567, with a median of 55,919 volumes. Their incomes range from \$989,227 to \$1,977 with a median income of \$227,192.

The special libraries included an Army technical and Army and Air Force community libraries, two technical college libraries, a for-profit information center, and a Department of Public Health library. Current statistics are available for only four of the special libraries; these range in volumes owned from 75,000 to 1,887, with a median of 21,598, and in income from \$220,000 to \$33,295, with a median income of \$55,919.

Three county and five city school systems and two private schools were members. Although statistics are not available, it is suspected that these school libraries, like the vast majority of school libraries in the state, are less than adequately stocked and funded.

Public library members included three non-rural city-county library systems and twenty-two rural libraries, all but one of which belong to two multi-county public library systems which are also members of SAMS. (The director of one of the rural public library systems chose to have his libraries and his system headquarters join as a unit rather than individually, so fourteen of the public libraries and one of the systems are counted as one member.)

Current statistics show the public libraries and systems ranging in population served from 215,400 to 810, with a median of 4,740; in circulation per year from 446,228 to 976, with a median of 14,378; in volumes owned from 258,671 to 2,493, with a median of 14,385; and in total yearly income from \$1,522,916 to \$1,977, with a median income of \$33,497.² In addition to the twenty-four public libraries and systems, two of the academic, two of the special, and eight of the school libraries are in rural areas of the state.³

Methodology

In addition to the diversity created by four different types of libraries ranging vastly in resources and located in both rural and non-rural areas, the researcher was faced with the challenge of assessing the needs and priorities of a group of library directors who differed vastly in formal education and professional experience. Many were unfamiliar with survey methodology and with the philosophy and rationale of multitype cooperation. Since libraries had acquired new directors in the several years during which the system was being formed, some of the directors did not really understand the cooperative system. For these reasons the researcher and the system's director visited the libraries before surveying the members. This provided an opportunity to talk with the personnel about the system's purpose, to discuss the many activities proposed, and to explain the questionnaire that would be mailed after all the visits were completed. Visits were made to thirty of the forty-one member libraries, telephone interviews were held with other directors

The List of Activities

Before beginning the visits, the researcher and the director developed a preliminary list of possible activities with the assistance of the system's Program Planning Committee, an advisory committee of members appointed by the director to help determine the direction of the system's programs and services. After choosing the most feasible activities the director asked the members of the Program Planning Committee to review the choices, the majority of which

pertained to sharing resources. Other activities included continuing education, communication, public relations, and consulting services. After obtaining the committee's approval of the activities, the researcher and the director wrote precise descriptions of them.

The Interviews

During the next six months the researcher and director visited over thirty libraries. Directors, staff, etc., discussed their library's needs and their expectations of benefits to be derived from system membership. They were then shown the description of activities and given a chance to review these and to suggest additional activities. Lastly, the delegates were shown an early draft of the questionnaire.

Over half of those interviewed mentioned the need for workshops and other continuing education. Several interviewees also pointed out the need for less formal opportunities for librarians within an area to meet together to share ideas and discuss common problems. Resource sharing activities such as access to the holdings of other libraries and the facilitation of interlibrary loans were mentioned almost as often as the need for continuing education activities.

The visits were extremely helpful in refining the list of activities with which to survey the membership. A few activities on the original list were combined or dropped and others (stand-alone library automation system, database reference services, cooperative purchasing, the informal discussion sessions, and division of the interlibrary loan activity into an interlibrary loan agreement and an interlibrary loan librarian) were added as a result of the interviews.

The Survey Instrument

A questionnaire was developed using the final list of activities compiled by the researcher and director and approved by the Program Planning Committee. The questionnaires were sent, along with a cover letter and the list of descriptions, to each of the forty-one delegates to the system's District Assembly in mid-February of 1988. (Copies of the questionnaire, cover letter, and activity

descriptions are appended] The delegates were asked to indicate whether their library's need for SAMS to provide each of the twenty-one activities was extremely high, high, moderate, low, or extremely low. They were then asked to rank the five activities for which their library had the greatest need. The delegates were also asked to suggest other activities and topics for workshops and to list aspects of library operations on which they desired assistance.

The Delegates' Responses

Responses were received from each of the forty-one delegates for a return rate of 100 percent. Such a high return rate is unusual for a mailed survey and is perhaps an indication of the members' interest in SAMS and their commitment to multiple library cooperation. A high rate of return is very important to the success of program planning.

Provision of the Twenty-one Activities

In tabulating the responses to the question which asked the delegates to indicate their library's need for SAMS to provide each of the twenty-one activities listed, points were allotted as follows. Each time a delegate indicated that his or her library had an extremely high need for a particular activity to be provided, a score of five was computed for that activity. Each indication of a high need received four points, a moderate need three points, a low need two points, and an extremely low need one point. Points were totaled for each activity, and an arithmetic average (a mean) was calculated for each.

The activities were then ranked by arranging the means in descending order from the highest to the lowest. (The higher the mean, the more needed the activity was perceived to be by the membership as a group.) A statistical test (standard deviation) was used to ascertain the dispersion (or agreement) of the individual members' ratings of their perceived need for each activity. (The lower the standard deviation, the stronger the agreement of the members.)

A mean score of 3.5 to 4 indicated that the members perceived their need for provision by SAMS of a particular activity to be moderately high to high. The

nine activities so perceived were: workshops, an interlibrary loan agreement, a directory, a newsletter discussion sessions, consulting assistance, access to AULS (Alabama Union List of Serials), on-site training, and telefacsimile document delivery. Agreement on the need for workshops, discussion sessions, a newsletter, and a directory can be seen to have been quite strong. Agreement on the need for an interlibrary loan agreement and for consulting assistance, although not as strong, was still fairly strong. The members' agreement on the need for on-site training and telefacsimile document delivery was much less strong, and their agreement on the need for access to AULS the weakest shown for any of the activities. These standard deviations indicated that members who rated the last three activities highly rated them very highly.

Need for provision by SAMS of the ten activities which obtained mean scores between 3 and 3.5 was perceived as merely moderate to moderately high by system members. Activities on which the members' agreement was weaker, such as a shared circulation system, delivery/courier service, interlibrary loan librarian, and a stand-alone automation system, may have been considered more necessary by individual delegates, however.

Only two activities, cooperative purchasing and database reference service, received mean scores less than 3, the need for these activities was perceived as moderately low to moderate by the group. Their standard deviations, which are among the highest, indicate that some of the members considered their need for the activities to be much greater than that of the overall group, however.

The twenty-one activities are listed below in descending order according to their mean scores.

Activities with Means of 3.5-4	Mean	Standard Deviations
Workshops	3.9512	.9474
ILL Agreement	3.8780	1.0999
Directory	3.8537	.9890
Newsletter	3.7317	.9493
Discussion Sessions	3.6098	.9455
Consulting Assistance	3.5854	1.0482
Access to AULS	3.5854	1.5326
On-site Training	3.5610	1.2460
Telefacsimile	3.5366	1.2267

Activities with Means of 3 - 3.4999 Mean Standard Deviations

Access to a Union Catalog	3.4878	1.2869
Shared Circulation System	3.3902	1.3015
Speakers' Bureau	3.2439	1.1786
Delivery/Courier Service	3.2429	1.3925
InfoPass	3.2195	1.0843
Scholarships	3.2195	1.1940
Inclusion in AULS	3.2195	1.3695
Inclusion in Union Catalog	3.1463	1.2157
ILL Librarian	3.0976	1.3001
Stand-alone Automation Sys.	3.0976	1.5134

Activities with Means of 2.5-2.9999 Mean Standard Deviation

Cooperative Purchasing	2.8537	1.5258
Database Reference Services	2.8293	1.4816

A second way to consider the respondents' rating of the activities is to examine the percentage of delegates that indicated an extremely high or high need and the percentage that indicated a low or an extremely low need. When responses of delegates representing all four types of libraries were combined, a majority indicated an extremely high or high need for the following: workshops (76%), newsletter (68%); interlibrary loan agreement and directory (66%), access to AULS (61%); consulting assistance (59%), access to a union catalog for the system (58%), telefacsimile and discussion sessions (54%); and on-site training (51%). A majority (51%) indicated that they had either a low or an extremely low need for database reference service.

Responses According to Type of Library

When responses for each type of library are examined, observation reveals that only one activity, an interlibrary loan agreement, was perceived as being of high need by representatives of three of the four types of libraries' and only one activity, workshops, was rated from moderately high to high by all four groups. Five activities received mean scores indicative of a moderately high to high perceived need from at least three of the four groups. These activities were a directory (academic, special, public); a newsletter (academic, school, public); access

to AULS (academic, special, school); consulting assistance (special, school, public); and access to a union catalog (special, school, public).

Tests were conducted to determine whether the differences observed in the ratings of the activities by representatives of different types of libraries were statistically significant.⁵ Only eight out of the twenty-one activities received ratings that were significantly different: an interlibrary loan agreement, an interlibrary loan librarian, access to the Alabama Union List of Serials, inclusion in the Alabama Union List of Serials, a directory of libraries, cooperative purchasing, a speakers' bureau, and informal discussion sessions.

The need for an interlibrary loan agreement was rated significantly higher by academic, special, and school librarians than by public librarians; school librarians also rated their need for an interlibrary loan librarian significantly higher than did public librarians. The need for access to the Alabama Union List of Serials was rated significantly higher by special than by academic, school, or public librarians, while special librarians rated their need to be included in this tool significantly higher than school librarians. Special librarians also rated their need for a directory of libraries higher than did either school or public librarians.

Cooperative purchasing received a significantly higher rating from academic, school, and public than from special librarians. A speakers' bureau was rated significantly higher by school than by academic, special, or public librarians. The need for having informal discussion sessions was rated significantly higher by public than by school librarians.

Members' Top Priorities

Responses to the question asking members to rank their top priorities were tabulated by assigning a score of five to each of the respondents' first choices, four to the second choices, three to the third choices, two to the fourth choices, and one to the fifth choices. A total score was then calculated for each of the activities. The scores revealed that some of the activities which were perceived to be of extremely high or high need by less than a majority of the members were evidently top priorities of those who did perceive them thusly.

One activity, in erlibrary loan agreement, received a score, 75, that was twenty-three points above those obtained for any of the other activities, indicating that several of the delegates ranked this activity highly. In fact, twenty-seven (66%) of the respondents had indicated that their library's needs for SAMS to provide an interlibrary loan agreement was extremely high or high.

Less expected might be the second ranked activity, a shared circulation system, which received 52 points and was the first choice of five, the second choice of six, and the fourth choice of one of the respondents. Although ten activities had obtained higher mean scores, eighteen of the forty-one respondents had indicated that their library's need for SAMS to provide this activity was extremely high or high. Three others had indicated a low need, and four had indicated an extremely low need, however.

The score of 49 received by the third ranked activity, workshops, was surprising only in that it was not higher. The first choice of five, second choice of one, third choice of three, fourth choice of four and fifth choice of three of the respondents, this activity was rated as extremely high or high by thirty (75%) of the respondents and as less than moderate by only three.

A stand-alone library automation system, which was the fourth highest ranked at 44 points, was chosen as the first priority of five, the second priority of three, the third priority of one, and the fourth priority of two of the respondents. Although ten had rated such a system as extremely high or high, seven of the respondents had rated it as low and another nine as extremely low.

Access to AULS received 39 points, database reference services and telefacsimile 38, cooperative purchasing 32 and delivery/courier service and a directory 30 points each. On-site training was awarded 28 points and inclusion in AULS received 22 points

Recommending Workshop Topics

After being asked to rate the twenty-one activities and rank their top priorities, the delegates were also requested to suggest workshop topics. Twenty-five responded with a total of sixty-three recommendations.

Several of the topics recommended were of interest to representatives of different types of libraries. Of the eight requests for topics related to reference, three were from public, two each from academic and special, and one from a school library representative. The eight requests for workshops on automation were made by four academic, two special, and two school library representatives. Four suggestions for cataloging workshops were offered by two public, one academic, and one school library representative, and four for weeding by two public, one special, and one school library representative. Collection development was suggested by an academic, a special, and a public librarian. Grantmanship and dealing with the problem patron were each suggested by an academic and a public librarian, book repair by a school and a public library representative, and publicity by a school and an academic library representative.

Many of the additional topics suggested by representatives of only one type of library would seem to have relevance for all types. Most obvious among these were disaster planning, CD Rom, management, personnel administration, supervision, library security, services to the handicapped, preservation, equipment maintenance, selection and cataloging of audio-visuals, scheduling, inventory control, and output measurement.

Supervising student assistants would probably be of interest to academic, public, and school librarians, while teaching library skills to elementary school students, conducting book talks, and motivating high school students to read might be more helpful to public and school librarians. Some suggestions, the most notable being avoiding the duplication of special collections and meetings with other librarians to discuss problems and ideas, would seem to necessitate involvement of representatives from all four types of libraries.

Requesting Consulting Assistance

Several of the library services and operations on which the respondents indicated they would like consulting assistance might also be handled by the workshop format. Most requests were for consulting in reference, cataloging, automation, and collection development.

Recommendations

The researcher recommended that in choosing activities for the overall membership, the director focus especially on activities such as workshops, an interlibrary loan agreement, a directory, a newsletter, informal discussion sessions, and consulting assistance, which also obtained moderately high to high mean score (3.5 or above) and a low or fairly low standard deviation when rated by the group as a whole. Provision by SAMS of these activities was perceived to be needed by a large number of the members.

Consideration should be given to providing the overall membership with access to AULS, on-site training, and telefacsimile, which also obtained moderately high to high mean scores. Although agreement on the need for provision of these activities was less strong, all were rated as extremely high or high by a majority of the members. Consideration of providing access to a union catalog for the system was also recommended because, while obtaining a slightly lower mean score, the need for this activity was also rated as extremely high or high by a majority of the members.

It was recommended that activities with a mean score lower than 3.4 and a low standard deviation, such as InfoPass, speakers' bureau, and scholarships, not be offered at this time since their ratings indicated that the members agreed they did not perceive much need for these activities, none of which was rated as extremely high or high by a majority. Although inclusion in AULS and in a union catalog also fit this description, members' holdings would, of course, have to be included if such a catalog were constructed. The low score for these activities could be a result of the request that delegates consider their libraries' needs rather than the needs of the system as a whole.

Activities with a mean score lower than 3.4 and a high to fairly high standard deviation, such as a shared circulation system, delivery/courier service, an interlibrary loan librarian, a stand-alone library automation system, cooperative purchasing, and database reference services, were not recommended for the membership as a whole. Instead, it was suggested that provision might be

considered for those libraries whose delegates either rated as extremely high or high or chose an activity as a top priority.

The membership as a whole was in strong agreement on the need for SAMS to provide workshops. Since several topics were of interest to representatives of different types of libraries and others seem relevant regardless of library type, it was recommended that consideration be given to offering workshops for the entire membership on as many of the topics recommended by the members as possible and that "mini-workshops" be offered on topics for which fewer members indicated an interest.

Since the interviews and the survey also indicated that members were interested in less formal sessions to discuss mutual problems and share ideas, the researcher recommended that the director sponsor such sessions for librarians within a small (one or two county) area. These informal "get togethers" would seem to be an excellent means of improving cooperation among staff members of different types of libraries within a particular locality. They could, of course, be combined with brief workshops on topics of interest to those invited to attend. Although several of the topics on which members requested consulting assistance might be addressed during workshops, additional assistance might need to be provided to individual librarians.

In summary, both the interviews and the questionnaires showed that the members of SAMS felt a strong need for cooperative activities. In addition to offering activities perceived to be of extremely high or high need by the members, the researcher recommended further that those activities with the greatest potential for encouraging a cooperative spirit among librarians and facilitating the sharing of resources among different types of libraries within a local area be provided.

Use of Study Results

The director found the study to be very helpful in determining system services during the first years of operation. Based on the needs expressed during interviews and the preferences for services indicated on the questionnaire, the

director decided to develop an interlibrary loan agreement and a directory of the system's library resources and to offer at least four continuing education opportunities on topics requested by the members and four informal discussion sessions located in selected localities annually, in addition to providing for referring consulting assistance.

She also began planning a system of document delivery between selected SAMS libraries, using both delivery by courier and telefacsimile transmission. Because it was not practical for the system to provide a shared circulation system (ranked second when members listed, the five activities for which their library had the greatest need) the director chose immediate initiation of delivery and followed the development of group access to OCLC by SOLINET as a networking activity for the SAMS member libraries.

The director continued a program of providing copies of the Alabama Union List of Serials to the members and began plans for including their holdings in the union list of serials and in the statewide database (ALICAT) developed by the state library agency.

In addition to following the recommendations of the researcher in planning services, the director had to keep in mind planning for a permanent funding structure which was being done simultaneously with system activity planning. For this reason, the director looked to services that could derive a recovery of cost from the users, or, in a worst case scenario, would be possible for the members to maintain on their own if the system funding were discontinued. Again, ground delivery provided by a United Parcel Service contract was viewed to be a viable program for cost recovery or member continuation.

The director adopted the results of the needs assessment in her development of a five-year long-range plan. It was determined that the needs assessment would provide the basis for program planning for the first five years of service, after which the process should be repeated to allow for the impact of technological advances on member libraries, and the changing perceptions of the members of a more mature system. The director, the SAMS Board, and the Program Planning Committee believed that the methodology led to such a high degree of accuracy

that no additional formal assessment activities would be necessary for the first five years of service.

NOTES

¹For an excellent explanation of the advantages inherent in multitype cooperation, see Hamilton, Beth A., ed, Multitype Library Cooperation (New York: Bowker, 1977), 3-10. Articles especially relevant to multitype cooperation in rural areas include Coe, Mar. J., "Indiana Case Study 2: The Stone Hills Area, A Rural Experience," in Multitype Cooperation, 75-81; DeJohn, William, "The Impact of Technology and Networks on the Future of Rural Public Library Service," Library Trends 28 (Spring 1980): 633-648; and Hedding, Linda, "Cooperative Opportunities for Rural Libraries," Rural Libraries 3 (Fall 1983): 61-73.

²American Library Directory, 41st ed (New York: Bowker, 1988).

³According to the Bureau of the Census definition of rural as "places of less than 2500 population and outside of urbanized areas." U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population: United States Summary, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1972), vol. 1, pt. 1, p.x.

⁴The highest mean obtained for any activity rated by the public library representatives as a group was 3.8571, so no activity could be considered to have been rated high (a mean score of 4) by all four groups.

⁵A two-tailed T test was used to analyze whether there was a significant difference according to type of library. To be considered significantly different, comparison of the pairs of means obtained for an activity would have to result in a p less than .05.



GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF LIBRARY SERVICE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

February 18, 1993

Dear SAMS Member,

Kathy Wright and I certainly enjoyed our visit with you. We appreciated your giving us a tour of the facilities and sharing your aspirations for the library with us. Our talks with you and the other members helped us develop the enclosed list of activities. As you will see, we have added several activities to the original list we left with you.

We would appreciate it very much if you would help us further by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Based on suggestions made during our visits, we decided to conduct the survey through the mail rather than over the telephone as originally intended. Kathy asked me to remind you to call her at SAMS headquarters (244-9264) if you have any questions concerning the activities as you are filling out your questionnaire. If she is not in the office, please leave a message on her answering machine. She will return your call as soon as possible.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me in the enclosed envelope by March 4th. If I have not received it by March 9th I will assume you have questions about the questionnaire itself and will call you as originally promised. Please address each activity in terms of your library's needs rather than in terms of the needs of the overall system. You are welcome to solicit the opinions of your staff and board members, but please return only one questionnaire per library. Thank you in advance for helping your director determine which of the many activities possible are needed by SAMS members.

Yours truly,

Annebel Stephens
Assistant Professor

AS/fw
Enclosure

NEEDS ASSESSMENT—SAMS MEMBERS

- Please indicate your library's need for SAMS to provide each of the activities listed below by placing an X in the appropriate box. (Descriptions of each of the activities are included in your packet.)

Activities	NEED FOR ACTIVITY				
	Extremely High	High	Moderate	Low	Extremely Low
A. Interlibrary Loan Agreement					
B. Interlibrary Loan Librarian					
C. Database Reference Services					
D. Delivery/Courier Service					
E. Telefacsimile Service					
F. Info-Pass					
G. Cooperative Purchasing					
H. Directory of Libraries					
I. Inclusion in Alabama Union List of Serials					
J. Access to Alabama Union List of Serials					
K. Inclusion in a Union Catalog for the System					
L. Access to a Union Catalog for the System					
M. Shared Circulation System					
N. Stand-alone Library Automation System					
O. Scholarships					
P. Workshops					
Q. On-site Training					
R. Discussion Sessions					
S. Newsletter					
T. Speakers' Bureau					
U. Consulting Assistance					

- Please indicate by letter (in order of priority) the five activities from the above list for which your library has the greatest need.

Highest
Priority

Lowest
Priority
(of the five)

3. If your library needs for SAMS to provide any activities not previously mentioned, please list these.

4. Please suggest topics of workshops for SAMS members.

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

5. If you would like consulting assistance on particular library services and operations, please list these.

<hr/>	<hr/>
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Name

Name of Library

(or other
organization)

Phase I Activities

RESOURCE SHARING

Interlibrary Loan Agreement	An agreement for loaning materials between SAMS libraries which will simplify borrowing protocol, where needed, and provide a method of protection for lending libraries
Interlibrary Loan Librarian	A SAMS employee who will verify requests from member libraries and make arrangements for having materials transferred from library to library once an interlibrary loan agreement has been established
Database Reference Services	Access to databases such as DIALOG, BRS, MEDLINE, NEXUS, etc., to which your library does not subscribe
Delivery/Courier Service	Transport of materials from one SAMS library to another
Telefacsimile Service	A service providing for instant transfer of photocopies of articles or pages of books from library to library
Info-Pass	An agreement by which patrons of one SAMS library can receive permission to check out materials from another SAMS library on a one-time basis
Cooperative Purchasing	Allows for discount purchases of like items such as computer software, supplies and equipment, and print and non-print materials by buying in bulk
Directory of Libraries	Information on the collection strengths, special collection, hours, services, and staff specialties of SAMS libraries
Inclusion in Alabama Union List of Serials	Including records of the periodical holdings of your library in the Alabama Union List of Serials (AULS)
Access to Alabama Union List of Serials	Having a copy of the Alabama Union List of Serials (AULS) provided to your library
Inclusion in a Union Catalog for the System	Having the materials owned by your library listed in a union catalog for SAMS members
Access to a Union Catalog for the System	Having a union catalog of materials owned by SAMS libraries created and a copy provided to your library
Shared Circulation System	An automated system with which to circulate materials, generate overdue notices, inventory holdings, and have immediate knowledge of the availability of materials owned by other SAMS libraries participating in the automated network

Stand-alone Library Automation System	Shared purchasing of stand-alone software for library applications by individual libraries (This would allow cost savings but not the networking capability of a shared circulation system.)
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CONTINUING EDUCATION

Scholarships	Funding for staff members of SAMS libraries to attend workshops and meetings
Workshops	Library service educational programs for staff from several SAMS libraries
On-site Training	Training held at a SAMS library to meet the particular needs of that library
Discussion Session	Informal gatherings to exchange ideas and discuss problems and their solutions with other SAMS members

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Newsletter	A newsletter which will include information on system activities and items of interest to SAMS members
Speakers' Bureau	Listing of individuals with expertise in areas of interest to SAMS members who have agreed to be available as speakers

CONSULTING SERVICES

Consulting Assistance	Assistance with the planning and implementation of library services and operations
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STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR RURAL LIBRARIES: A CALIFORNIA CASE

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Abstract

This paper describes the initiation of a strategic planning process used by the Yolo County (California) Library system. The planning was triggered by a variety of external factors, including new technologies and increased community demands for services, and internal factors, including static budgets and staff turnover. Four different research techniques involving community volunteers were used to gather data and information on the seven communities served and expectations of patrons and non-patrons and of community leaders. This case is instructive for other librarians in rural settings and suggests the need for examining roles of librarians and libraries through an ongoing strategic planning process.

Introduction

American public libraries face unprecedented crises. Continuing governmental budget deficits, accelerating demographic changes, and the availability of new, costly information technologies, create a mix of challenges for librarians responsible for the stewardship of these important community resources. The goodwill traditionally associated with libraries no longer is automatically

extended by the public or sufficient to ensure their survival. Rural libraries and rural librarians may be the most vulnerable to such threats. Fiscal disaster has struck some small libraries, crippling them, even leading to closures.¹ Low salaries, all too common in rural libraries, often lead to high staff turnover. An inadequately trained staff may limit the services many clients expect. Rural libraries, no less than their urban counterparts, need librarians capable of creatively confronting new situations. Librarians must not only work harder, but smarter.

This paper describes how one small library system in rural California, faced with fiscal constraints and a rapidly changing environment, actively began to plan its future. Detailed are certain procedures used as part of a strategic planning process that involved local residents and decision makers. The process used an act. research approach with methods for assessing the local communities' support and expectations of the local branch libraries. Lessons gained from this case should be useful to other library systems, particularly small systems, faced with difficult times.

The Yolo County Library System

Yolo County is a 1,000 square mile county located between San Francisco and Sacramento. The Yolo County Free Public Library System serves a population of 90,300 (of a total of 150,000) through seven branch libraries, a central administrative office, and a staff of 42 (representing 28.125 FTE). Libraries are located in three incorporated communities (ranging in population from 4,500 to 50,000) and three unincorporated areas (ranging in population from 600 to 3,700). A fourth incorporated city of 40,000 is served by an independent city library. The 1987 annual budget was slightly more than \$1 million, relatively unchanged since 1970. This level of funding is in contrast to the increases in population (Figure 1) and circulation in the same time period (Table 1). The 1985-86 actual per capita expenditure for library operations (salaries/benefits, books, periodicals, services, and supplies) was \$11.00.

Figure 1.
Yolo County Population: 1920-2010

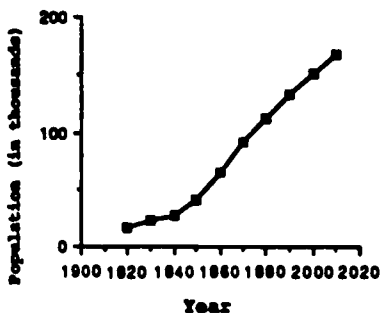


Table 1: Book circulation for Yolo County Library System (County-wide)

1970	1975 (5 year % increase)	1980 (5 year % increase)	1985 (5 year % increase)
279,548	372,220 (25%)	405,088 (9%)	460,361 (13%)

Constructing a New Perspective Through Strategic Planning

The effort in Yolo County used a strategic planning process coupled with action research. Strategic planning was viewed as a process of decision making and implementation. Key components of that process were the steps to collect information to be used by librarians to construct new ways of viewing roles and relationships for the libraries with the communities served. In strategic planning processes, distinct specific steps (e.g., values audit, mission formulation, strategic modeling, performance audit, gap analysis, contingency planning, and environmental scanning) precede implementation (Nolan 1987). In this study, efforts were aimed at environmental scanning, performance audit, and gap

analysis. An action research approach (Sommer and Amick 1984) was used in conjunction with four data collection techniques to gather quantitative and qualitative data used in the scanning and audit steps. The action research approach was aimed at improving the organizational effectiveness of the library while involving participants in the change (i.e., library staff, community volunteers, students, and others) in the research. The assessment of the library's seven community environments was a collaboration between the librarian, the library staff, community volunteers, and members of the community development staff and students of the University of California Cooperative Extension. Although project documents were produced (see Grieshop and Stephens 1987; Grieshop, Fretz, and Faletti 1987)², emphasis was more on the process of planning. Those documents served as tools to facilitate discussion, to aid in the design of alternative futures, and to improve decision making by a county wide Citizen's Library Advisory Committee composed of representatives of the 7 areas and of elected officials. This Committee, in addition to the County Librarian, constituted the responsible planning body. These planning and research processes helped to create the vision of the future for the Yolo County Library System. These processes, however, did not serve to implement the vision.

The four community assessment methods selected were a telephone survey, a paper and pencil in-library survey, key informant interviews, and focus group interviews (Chart 1). The aim was through 'triangularization' or taking measurements from at least three angles while using surveys and interviews to create reliable, accurate, and complete portraits of each community in reference to its library. Methods chosen were to be practical and readily usable by library professionals and, with proper guidance and supervision, by volunteers. Another method selection consideration was whether the method would contribute to the building or, at least, the reinforcement of a community-library partnership. For the librarians, community research led to an assessment of the public's views, their needs, and possibilities for future development. For the public, the contact, especially through the telephone, key informant, and focus group interviews, offered a view of the possibilities and limits within which the library had to work.

Chart 1: Summary of Community Assessment Methods

	Telephone Survey	Patron Survey	Key Leader Interview	Focus Group Interview
Primary Characteristics	A structured interview conducted by telephone with narrowly focused and open-ended questions	A paper and pencil questionnaire with focused questions to be completed on site - the library	In-person interview of individuals with open-ended questions and many question probes.	An interview of a group with emphasis on generating discussion among members on general questions.
Target Audience	Both library users and non-users, selected on a random basis	Library users Self-selected	Individuals representing business, government, schools, and community-identified as leaders	Individuals representative of local communities Both users and non-users
Types of Information Generated	Emphasis on awareness, knowledge of and support for library. Data on use, services, shortcomings, changes needed, plus demographic information	Emphasis on use patterns of library, support, and preferred changes as well as demographic information.	Emphasis on perceived mission, roles, and services of library and on how groups use the library.	Emphasis on perceptions of library, individuals, interaction with library and relationship of the library to local community
Types of Results	Primarily quantitative frequencies, percentages, rankings	Primarily quantitative frequencies, percentages, rankings	Qualitative: Summaries of ideas, opinions, suggestions, but categorized by respondent groups and communities	Qualitative: Summaries of groups' views, suggestions
Special Requirements	Need to organize a system to randomly select persons to be called	Decisions on when the surveys will be available to the public	Skills in listening and asking probe questions Selection of "Key Leaders"	Skills in facilitating a group discussion
Resources Needed	Skilled individuals to do phoning, with patience and time to complete phone calls. Persons to do coding and tabulating of data. Phones. Computer, computer operator. Money for printing costs	Person(s) to code and tabulate data. Computer for data entry and analysis, money for printing costs.	Person skilled in conducting in-depth interviews and with time to schedule interviews.	Skilled person for leading discussions. Persons to organize and host focus groups.
Strengths of Method	Get results from both users and non-users	Can be done periodically throughout the year to monitor use, satisfaction, needed changes.	Can yield in-depth information on library and its relationship to community. Can be used to monitor key leaders' views.	Can yield important information on short and long range changes and depth of support.
Limitations	Individuals interviewed may not be random. Persons without phones, or with unlisted numbers not included. May eliminate non-English speakers	Self-selected group of respondents, not random. May leave out non-English readers, less literate, and sight impaired	Time consuming. Respondents may be coy. "Leaders" may be neither representative nor leaders.	Always a question of representativeness of group.

Among the question categories used to focus the data gathering phase of the project were:

- 1) What is the level of support for the library in the community?
- 2) What are appropriate roles and mission for librarians and the library in the community?
- 3) What changes or additions are needed in the library?

Training and involvement of local volunteers were integral pieces of the research and educational process. Some of the 40 volunteers had worked with the local libraries before--many had not. Each helped to bridge gaps between the library and the larger community. Volunteers were trained as interviewers, collaborated on the design of survey questions, and reviewed and interpreted results. For example, to conduct telephone interviews, a volunteer not only had to be capable of conducting interviews but also had to be well informed about the library. As they interviewed residents by phone, they were able to "teach" by asking and answering questions and by explaining the needs of the library.

Results

The assessments carried out from late January to early April, 1987 included nearly 500 telephone interviews, almost 600 pen and pencil surveys, 16 focus group interviews, and 49 key leader interviews. These activities involved volunteers from the seven communities, students, and library staff. Care was taken to plan what and how many questions were to be asked and how many interviews were to be completed. Furthermore, the human resources needed to manage the collection and analyses of the information were also determined available and trained. Consequently, a large, but nevertheless manageable, quantity of information and data were gathered from the perspective of the seven communities and from patrons and non-patrons alike. Analyses of the data were performed by the University personnel, although results were analyzed and interpreted by the library and advisory board personnel. The findings presented are combinations of responses from the quantitative telephone and paper and

pencil surveys, along with trends, summaries, and general conclusions based on the qualitative focus group and in-depth interviews. Sources are indicated.

Community Support for the Library

Questions related to community support for the library were central to all the surveys and interviews. Support, or the lack of it, was a definer of the environments in which the library functioned. Support was understood in relation to financial issues, including bond issues to expand and build new facilities, special taxes, and continuing level of financial and volunteer support.

In Yolo County a gap was found between the number of local citizens who viewed the library favorably and those who would support it financially (Table 2). While 89% of the general population polled in the telephone interview and 85% of the patrons indicated feeling "favorable" about the library, only 57% of the general population and 66% of the patrons would vote for a tax increase for the library. This truth mirrors recent election results on library bond measures in nearby counties, i.e., while bond measures receive a majority of voter's support, they do not receive the required two-thirds support to pass. The general population agreed the library is a vital part of their community, but that agreement was weaker when personal finances are to be assessed. The public viewed the library as one of many tax supported services, e.g., fire, police, road, that competes for support. In order to gain the necessary support, libraries must continually and creatively demonstrate their importance to the community.

Table 2. Percent levels of support county-wide of the Library

	Very favor	Somewhat favor	Not sure	Somewhat unfavor	Very unfav
General population's feelings about the local branch of the library	53	36	7	3	0
Patron's feelings about the local branch of the library	51	34	7	2	6

	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Do not know
General population that would support a tax increase for the library	57	20	6	7
Patrons who would support a tax increase for the library	66	26	5	10
General population that would volunteer at the library	27	21	42	10
General population that would join the "Friends of the Library"	30	26	36	7

In Yolo County 37% of the population indicated they "rarely heard" of the library. This finding suggests that librarians must move beyond the walls of the library into the community with their services. Increased public relations and community education work are suggested by these findings. Both new and existing programs and services must be packaged for patrons and used to attract non-patrons.

Another indicator of community support is the activities of volunteers. Volunteers, as individuals or groups, can be extensions of the staff, and organizations such as the "Friends of the Library" can be separate support groups. Both types of volunteers can and must play active roles to foster the positive, supportive relationships between community and library.

At the time of the study, the county system did not have any organized volunteer program or staff person responsible for such a program. Several branches did have incorporated "Friends of the Library" organizations. In the telephone survey 27% of county residents interviewed indicated they would volunteer at the library, while 30% indicated they would join the "Friends". These

figures imply a core community commitment exists to provide support through volunteering. An underutilized and unmobilized potential source of human energy to assist in the fiscally constrained library system lies in the communities. Volunteer's participation in this study serves as further verification. Success in tapping that resource depends on the system's willingness and ability to organize to develop and manage it.

Community Roles for Librarians and Libraries

Every library and librarian play a number of roles in relation to the external community (McClure, et al., 1987). External and internal demands are signals that a change in roles may be necessary. While librarians will continue performing many tasks as in the past, new roles and functions will have to be assumed if the system is to meet expectations of the public and other public institutions. New technologies present challenges. Resources, or their lack, will require librarians to work more efficiently and more intelligently. In addition to carrying out old roles, new skills will have to be mastered.

This study, in each of the four research methods, sought to identify demands and expectations from various perspectives. Results indicate local librarians in Yolo County may have to become more adept in working with and in the communities. The roles of community educator and community developer will require them to more actively and regularly assess communities, to work with and train volunteers, and to educate the public. Four general roles merit attention: offering popular materials, supporting the formal education system, furnishing materials for lifelong learning, and providing community oriented services. These four provide a workable scheme to consider the dynamics between the library's traditional roles and new ones.

Role 1: Offering popular materials: The provision of current, high interest, high demand materials was repeatedly stressed as a need, expectation, and right by the constituencies surveyed. Over one half of library patrons felt that the popular materials were the most important service provided. The general population ranked "pleasure reading and browsing" a close second to "looking for

information and materials on particular questions." These preferences were supported by the actual use patterns by patrons--not surprisingly; the general public used the library for reading, browsing, and researching.

In contrast, government and community leaders reflected different role expectations. Similarly, the focus group interviews with citizens knowledgeable about the community and library led to different expectations. Those individuals more involved with their community and/or the library (or at least those with the opportunity to talk of their expectations) saw it for its variety of services, and not just for a single service. In their eyes it was more a multiple service institution. They believed the library has to support the local schools, have more outreach, support literacy efforts, and, in general, be more of a service to the community. Planning to respond to diverse perceptions is a great challenge facing this system.

Role 2: Supporting the public education system: The role of the Yolo County libraries vis-a-vis schools was reflected in the high usage by school related populations. In all, over 50% of the patrons as queried by phone or the paper survey were part of a school age family unit. Nineteen percent of those patrons felt that the library's primary purpose was to provide information or materials related to school and/or a place to study. Relevant suggestions from governmental and civic leaders varied from the need for simply more communication between teachers and librarians to assist in student research to the development of contractual arrangements through which public libraries become responsible for school site libraries. This expectation indicated a concern for library related education at a time when California's school libraries are disappearing. From 1981 to 1985, there was a 23% decrease in total school librarians employed in California, leaving 68% of the schools without a certified librarian (Brandes, 1987). Recognizing the problem, one Yolo County branch created, with the help of public funds, a mechanism to bring local elementary students to the library. The results indicate that much more of the same is expected by leaders in all the communities. Can and should the county library endeavor to fill these performance gaps? Gaps provide opportunities to expand services and interactions with their community. But, responding to gaps also requires resources.

Role 3: Furnishing materials for lifelong learning: Patrons and non-patrons, community leaders and residents all believed the library must provide support for individuals of all ages who wish to pursue a sustained program of learning. Libraries were clearly associated with the issue of literacy. In Yolo County the general population felt a literacy program was needed as one of the top five most important additions to the library programming. Beyond this preference, little uniformity in preferences emerged and expressed needs of patrons varied widely. For some, reference materials were important. For others, special services for the home bound or incarcerated are of high priority. Overall, however, 79% of all residents surveyed stated the most important reason for the library was to help in acquiring information and materials on specific questions. The challenge is to acknowledge this expectation but to focus responses on a limited number of areas. Planning and decision making should lead to needed and acceptable areas. With such a wide variety of services possible, the libraries will need to balance allocation of resources among clearly defined and agreed upon services and materials.

Role 4: Providing community oriented services: Can the libraries serve as clearinghouses for rural community organizations and issues? One demand is that they should. Again, patrons and non-patrons, leaders and residents all expressed the need for a 'community center' role. Some libraries have resources to fulfill that expectation (e.g., meeting rooms, bulletin boards, and special locations for community programming about services). In several of the most rural communities and areas, the library is the only community wide organization available. In others, the library and the school constitute the sole community wide resources. Playing the role of a community focal point will place the library in the center of community activities. Decisions to actually pursue this role can bring many non-library users in contact with its services. But a decision to do so also portends change for the librarians. They not only answer questions and direct people to books, but must serve as facilitators, catalysts, and developers in their local institutions.

Change Considerations

Patrons and general public alike agreed the greatest changes necessary included more books and more hours or days open. This gap between what the library offers and what the public wants is neither new nor surprising. It seems to be a constant facing all libraries and librarians. Ranked next in importance for Yolo County by the general population was the need for a literacy program and more children's programs. This finding highlights the public's perception of the library as an educational institution. The public also indicated a demand for the enhancement of bookmobile services, computer reference service, and information and community information services. These additions focus on services outside the realm of books and magazines.

Whether offering popular materials, supporting the public education system, furnishing materials for lifelong learning and/or providing community services, the Yolo County Library system must make decisions on its future and policies. The message from the Yolo County public is: more of the same but with diversification and new services and roles. To accomplish one requires commitment. To do both requires an immense commitment by librarians and staffs, along with new skills and resources, including those related to ongoing strategic planning and management.

Implications

The mission of today's public library remains as before: in a democracy the library supports the people's government by providing public access to information and knowledge (Mason, 1985). However, change is all about. What has changed are the roles the library must play to fulfill this mission. New technologies, changing perceptions, and new demands are driving these changes, while fiscal constraints and traditional library philosophies and concerns inhibit them. For the librarian caught in the middle, the new and the old, the thesis and the antithesis, must be actively synthesized to create today's library. Librarians must become proactive in the planning, research, and action. Books will continue to be used and populations will continue to grow, and there will be a continued shortage in

professional staff (Crismond, 1986). Every library system must actively plan for, create, and manage change.

The results of this study are instructive, especially for small, rural based library systems. Yolo County is not that different from many other rural counties. The county's population is growing while its budget in general, and for the library in particular, has not grown. The local population is increasingly better educated and exhibits more diverse expectations for the local libraries. New technologies are available and needed for the efficient functioning of the system. The library staff is overextended and underpaid. All the ingredients required for institutional stress exist. In order to break out of the stress cycle, an intervention process had to be instituted.

The process of initiating change begins with a commitment to change. This commitment, combined with an understanding of the library's internal and external environment and its role in the community, sets the stage for actively creating a library supported by and fully servicing the population that utilizes it. In this process, the effect of new technologies and services must be evaluated to determine the roles that librarians are to assume. New, strengthened support must be secured to maintain these changes. Not only the role of the librarians, but also the role of the library in general must be decided. In striving to provide more and better services, the library must consider educating the public and increasing their voluntarism. The Yolo County Library, with its diversity of roles, reaches out and provides services and materials for many subgroups and individuals. Best-sellers are always in demand. School children use it for reference materials, resting, and for a safe harbor. The bookmobile reaches out into the more isolated areas of the county. Can the library initiate and maintain a dialogue with all these groups? Its very existence in the years to come may depend upon the grassroots education of the public, particularly the underserved groups, about the resources it can provide.

According to the county-wide telephone survey, 70% of the respondents claimed to have a library card and to have used the library in the past 12 months. But, 30% also indicated they did not use the library for reasons of not

having time or reason to use it, for reasons of inconvenience, and for reasons of not hearing about it. The future of the Yolo County system, and no doubt many other rural libraries, may depend on whether these reasons are considered.

In this paper we have attempted to describe a practical approach to initiating change in a rural library. This approach proved to be relatively inexpensive, although not without dollar and human costs. Those costs were well within the means of the Yolo County system, especially since the commitment from the top to institute institutional change was made. If such a commitment were not made, the planning and assessment process would be a waste.

This paper is also a call for change. Librarians must change their institutions if they are to survive. The research and assessment process incorporated as part of the strategic planning process is an integral part of that change, but only a beginning.

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NOTES

¹In Northern California during 1987-88 several counties severely reduced library services, closing branches, and laying off personnel due to fiscal constraints. In Shasta County, the county library system was closed.

²A copy of the manual "A Librarian's Guide for Conducting Community Analyses," is available by writing the senior author

ADOLESCENT READING A STUDY OF TWELVE RURAL PENNSYLVANIA TOWNS

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The reading behavior of young people is, or should be, of interest to librarians who seek to serve the informational and recreational reading needs of youth in small town and open country locations. This is true not simply because adolescents represent an important library clientele, but also because rural libraries, perhaps more than their metropolitan counterparts, are often seen as community service facilities with some responsibility for contributing to the development of productive and successful citizens (Loomis and Beagle, 1957; Vavrek, 1985). Moreover, it seems likely that youthful reading habits may affect later adult reading patterns, and hence may have long-term relevance to the support and usage of rural libraries (Razzano, 1985).

While studies have documented the incidence of reading by various adult groupings in the nation's population (Gallup, 1978; Harris, 1979; Yankelovich and White, 1978), there is little research on the incidence and nature of the reading behavior of adolescents (Wood, 1988), and even less dealing specifically with rural youth. Those few studies that have been done in this area have dealt with small samples and limited geographic areas (e.g., Jackle, 1984). The availability of data from a survey of the leisure-time activities of young people from selected rural communities in Pennsylvania provided an opportunity to obtain some information

on the reading behavior of youth in small town and open country areas of the state (Crider, Willits, and Funk, 1985).

Purpose

The purpose of this analysis was to describe the reported amount of time which these adolescents spent reading books and magazines and ascertain the personal and social characteristics of the youth associated with reading time.

The Data

In 1983, a total of 3294 students in the 8th and 11th grades of public schools in the county seats of twelve non-metropolitan counties in Pennsylvania answered questionnaires dealing with their leisure-time activities. County seat locations were chosen as study sites because of their generally central location in the counties and their traditional definition as hubs of area activities. The towns ranged in size from 700 to 16,000 inhabitants.

Frequency of reading was assessed by the following item: How many hours each week do you spend reading books and magazines? Less than two hours; 204 hours; 5-9 hours; 10 or more.

The relationships of reported reading frequency to the following types of variables were assessed:

Personal and Family Characteristics (grade level, number of siblings, father's occupation, mother's employment status, and mother's occupation, if employed).

Work Responsibilities (chores at home, holding of a summer job, working for pay now).

Other leisure-time activities (time spent with family, time with peers, number of school sports participations, number of school organizations belonged to, number of community organizational memberships, and hours spent watching television).

Statistical significance was tested by chi square analysis. Because of the large sample size, differences could be judged to be statistically significant, even

though they were too small to be substantively important or interpretable. As a result, relationships were required to be significant at the .001 level to be judged "significant" for this analysis.

Analysis

Over half of the youth sampled reported reading books and magazines 2 or more hours a week, more than one in four reported reading 5 or more hours a week and about one in ten said they read more than ten hours a week, Table 1. Thus, while overall, reading was not a dominant pastime, some young people did report fairly high levels of reading participation; others spent very little time reading.

There were pronounced differences between males and females in the incidence of reading. While more than half of the boys sampled spent less than two hours a week reading books and magazines, only 37 percent of the girls indicated so little time reading. Moreover, girls were nearly twice as likely as boys to indicate that they spent 10 or more hours reading in a week. The gender difference in reading frequency found for these rural adolescents parallels that found for teenagers and adults in the general population.

Grade level, number of siblings, and whether or not the young person's mother worked outside the home were not significantly related to reading frequency. However, both father's and mother's occupations were associated with reading frequency of their offspring. Sons and daughters of professionals and managers read the most; blue collar teenagers read the least. Although information on parent's educational level was not available in the current data, it seems likely that the noted occupational differences reflected both socioeconomic status and educational distinctions among the youths' parents.

It was anticipated that the more hours a youth spent working, either on chores at home or at a paying job, the less time he/she would spend reading books and magazines. Moreover, some previous research has suggested that, at least for urban young people, the work experience serves to divert them from leisure and studying activities and toward goals focused on the acquisition of material goods

(Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986). However, when the number of hours spent on working at a paying job now and during summer months were cross-tabulated with hours spent reading, neither relationship was statistically significant, Table 2. Hours per week spent on chores at home was significantly related to reading, but the relationship was positive rather than negative as had been anticipated. The greater the number of hours spent on chores, the more hours the youth spent reading.

Frequent participation in leisure-time activities was also expected to curtail the young person's time spent in reading. Indeed, popular stereotypes portray adolescents who are avid readers as pale recluses with thick eyeglasses who withdraw from peer group activities and family socializing. While the number of sports activities in which the youth engaged was negatively and significantly related to frequency of reading, all of the other measures of adolescent leisure involvement presented a different picture, Table 3. The more hours a youth spent socializing with family members, the more hours spent socializing with peers, and the more the involvement in school and community activities, the more hours he/she reported reading. Thus, those young people who were the most involved with their families and peer groups, and who participated in formal organizations in school and in the community were also the most likely to spend time reading. The single exception to this pattern was sports activities.

Other writers have suggested that television has supplanted reading for teenagers and adults alike in our society (Robinson and Converse, 1972). It was true in the current data set that the youth reported many more hours watching television than reading. Thus, less than one in ten of the sample members indicated that they watched TV less than two hours a week; 45 percent said they spent less than two hours a week reading books and magazines; while 43 percent of the youth indicated they watched TV ten or more hours in a week, only 10 percent said they spent ten or more hours reading. Nevertheless, despite the differences in the reported hours these young people spent watching TV and reading, it was noteworthy that the frequency of television viewing was not negatively related to reading frequency. Indeed, those youth who reported the

most television viewing were also the most likely to report reading five or more hours a week. Such a finding calls into question the idea that those persons who watch TV cease reading, substituting television viewing for recreational reading.

Discussion

While the rural youth in the sample reported fewer hours reading than watching television, more than one in four indicated that they devoted 5 or more hours a week to reading, and one in ten said they read 10 or more hours. Moreover, just as other studies have found a greater frequency of reading among females and those of higher socio-economic status (Wood, 1988), this study found that girls and adolescents from professional or managerial homes spent more time reading than did boys and those whose parents held lower white collar or blue collar jobs.

However, the present analysis goes beyond these general specifications to examine the relationships of reading involvement to the work and leisure activities of rural adolescents. It seemed reasonable to expect that youth who were heavily involved in other extra-school activities--work, other leisure-time pursuits, and/or participation in various organizations--would spend fewer hours per week reading than would their less involved counterparts. The current analysis, however, found a very different pattern. For these rural adolescents, the more the person was involved with his/her family and peers, participated in school and community activities, worked on chores at home, or watched television, the more hours he/she reported reading. Some other studies dealing with leisure-time usage have also reported this finding--the more the individual is involved in some things, the more he/she participates in other pursuits (Willits and Willits, 1986). While there may be limits in the extent to which this principle applies, these data suggest that active teenagers are also reading teenagers. Since youthful activity patterns are often reflected in adult behavior, it seems likely that these same adolescents are likely to continue to be relatively active as readers and as community leaders as they grow older.

In closing, it needs to be underscored that the present analysis has focused on reading behavior, not on library usage. The available data provided no information on the source of the young person's reading materials. Nevertheless, to the extent that rural libraries include as one of their functions the provision of books for recreational reading, it seems likely that those young people who read most often will be the most likely to be users. If nothing else, they represent the potential clientele and support system for rural libraries.

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Table 1. Relationships of personal and family characteristics to hours spent reading each week.

Characteristic	Number of Cases ^a	Hours Spent Reading				Chi Square
		< 2 hr.	2-4 hr.	5-9 hr.	10+ hr.	
		-----Percent-----				
Total Sample	3171	45.4	27.5	16.8	10.3	
Gender						
Male	1552	54.2	25.4	13.5	7.0	111.41*
Female	1577	36.7	29.6	20.1	13.6	
Grade						
8th	1778	45.0	26.5	16.9	11.6	7.88
11th	1393	45.9	28.7	16.7	8.7	
Number of Siblings						
None	680	46.6	28.5	15.0	9.9	19.22
One	1064	41.7	28.9	19.5	9.8	
Two	780	46.4	25.4	17.2	11.0	
Three or more	572	49.7	25.9	13.6	10.8	
Father's Occupation						
Professional, Manager	929	34.2	31.5	20.8	13.5	69.06*
Clerical, Sales	139	45.3	21.6	21.6	11.5	
Blue Collar	1345	50.3	27.5	13.9	8.3	
Mother's Employment Status						
Doesn't work outside home	1299	46.3	27.6	16.2	9.9	2.63
Works outside home	1735	43.7	28.0	17.5	10.9	
Mother's Occupation						
Professional, Manager	452	33.6	29.2	22.1	15.0	40.26*
Clerical, Sales	490	42.7	28.6	19.0	9.8	
Blue Collar	725	50.1	27.3	13.7	9.0	

*Significant .001

^aNumber of cases varies due to missing data.

Table 2. Relationships of work responsibilities to hours spent reading.

Work Responsibilities	Number of Cases ^a	Hours Spent Reading				Chi Square
		< 2 hr.	2-4 hr.	5-9 hr.	10+ hr.	
		-----Percent-----				
Hours/Wk. Spent on Chores						
at Home						
< 1 hr.	852	57.5	23.9	11.3	7.3	90.81*
2-4 hr.	1354	43.5	28.7	18.1	9.7	
5+ hr.	942	37.0	29.1	20.0	13.9	
Hours/Wk. Spent Working						
on Summer Job						
None	1653	42.8	28.1	17.8	11.3	20.47
1-9 hr.	531	49.0	26.4	14.5	10.2	
10-29 hr.	463	43.0	29.4	17.5	10.2	
30+ hr.	380	51.3	27.9	14.7	6.1	
Hours/Wk. Spent Working						
for Pay Now						
None	2002	45.4	27.2	17.0	10.4	4.88
1-9 hr.	528	43.6	28.8	18.4	9.3	
10-29 hr.	410	45.1	29.5	14.9	10.5	
30+ hr.	130	48.5	27.7	13.1	10.8	

*Significant .001

^aNumber of cases varies due to missing data.

Table 3. Relationships of participation in other leisure-time activities to hours spent reading.

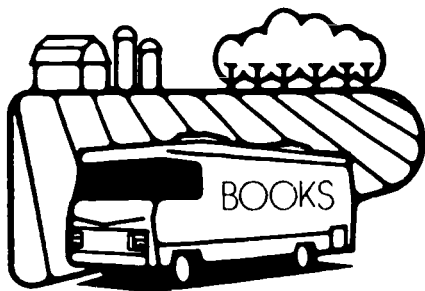
Leisure-time Activity	Number of Cases ^a	Hours Spent Reading				Chi Square
		< 2 hr.	2-4 hr.	5-9 hr.	10+ hr.	
		-----Percent-----				
Sports Activities						
None	1590	46.5	25.0	16.4	12.0	27.61*
One	698	44.3	28.7	15.8	11.3	
Two or more	843	44.1	31.6	17.8	6.5	
Hours/Wk. Spent with Family						
< 5 hrs.	1057	58.6	23.6	11.4	6.4	168.29*
5-9 hrs.	989	44.4	30.5	16.4	8.7	
10+ hrs.	1110	33.8	28.4	22.3	15.5	
Hours/Wk. Spent with Peers						
< 5 hrs.	636	53.9	23.1	14.3	8.6	28.64*
5-9 hrs.	954	44.1	30.2	16.0	9.6	
10+ hrs.	1571	42.7	27.6	18.2	11.5	
School Activities						
None	1136	57.0	23.0	12.9	7.0	156.16*
One	927	45.1	30.5	16.2	8.2	
Two or more	1081	32.8	30.0	21.5	15.7	
Community Activities						
None	1638	52.0	25.5	14.0	8.5	78.56*
One	812	41.3	29.3	18.5	11.0	
Two or more	691	33.9	30.2	21.9	14.0	
Hours/Wk. Watching TV						
< 2 hrs.	286	62.2	16.8	9.8	11.2	122.43*
2-4 hrs.	601	55.1	25.5	13.0	6.5	
5-9 hr.	923	43.0	33.8	14.2	9.0	
10+ hrs.	1353	39.4	26.4	21.7	12.5	

*Significant .001

^aNumber of cases varies due to missing data.

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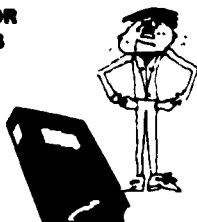
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